

橘公司

The author  
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Creation NIA

SpiritNo.2

AstralDress-SisterType Weapon-BookType[Rasiel]

LIVE

DATE



三重クリエイション



ファンタジア文庫

## 橘公司

### ●たちばなこうし

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東京都在住。第20回ファンタジア長編小説大賞準入选作『蒼穹のカルマ』でデビュー。七罪七変化。

憤怒七罪「バカにしやがってえ！」

暴食七罪「……うっぶ」

色欲七罪「……う、うふーん」

嫉妬七罪「土道が四糸乃撫でてた」

怠惰七罪「しにたい」

強欲七罪「結婚したい」

傲慢七罪「私超かわいい。世界一かわいい。宇宙一かげふっ（吐血）」



イラスト：つなこ  
カバーデザイン：草野剛



DATE A LIVE Creation N/A

デート・ア・ライブ 13 ニュートリエイション





「えっへっへ、いいよいいよー少年。もしかして足派だった？」

第9の精霊——二重 にあ





「アキバよ! あたしは帰ってきた!」

「二重はなんていうか……フル装備だな」

高校生——五河士道  
いづかしどう









「駄目だよ。そんなことしちや」

魔術師

アルテミシア・B・アシュクロフト

ベル

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精霊

THE SPIRIT

隣界に存在する特殊災害指定生命体。発生原因、存在理由ともに不明。  
こちらの世界に現れる際、空間震を発生させ、周囲に甚大な被害を及ぼす。  
また、その戦闘能力は強大。

## 対処法1

WAYS OF COPING 1

武力を以てこれを殲滅する。  
ただし前述の通り、非常に高い戦闘能力を持つため、達成は困難。

## 対処法2

WAYS OF COPING 2

——デートして、デレさせる。

# 二重クリエイション

Creation NIA

SpiritNo.2

AstralDress-SisterType Weapon-BookType[Rasie!]



## **Prologue: More Importantly, There's No Time Anymore**

At 03:00 a.m.

At that time everyone is usually already asleep. However, beside Itsuka residence, there is a room in the Spirit mansion that still has its light turned on. Inside, there were lots people flocking inside.

"Okay.....page fifteen.....is done!"

Trying to stay awake, Shido placed a cooling sheet on his forehead to prevent him from falling asleep. Even though he felt dizzy in his head, he slowly finished inking the manuscript.

Then, in response to him, a voice can be heard coming from around the table.

"....., Here, page sixteen has also been completed."

"Ka, Kaka.....Late. You're too slow Shido. For us hurricane children, who are like a falcon, have already stormed towards the next page."

"Time, collection..... Then, if you want to scan your manuscript into data together with Yuzuru's, please lend....."

Origami, Kaguya, and Yuzuru, collected their works after that was said. Everyone there was less energetic than usually. The reason is because they're too exhausted.

But it would also be understandable. Shido, when handing over the document to Yuzuru, got up from his chair and stretched his body. A stretch- stretch sound, which was unusual for a high school boy, can be heard from his back.

"Ouch....."

Shido while rubbing his waist, he started looking around at the condition of the room.

Inside the large room, a mountain of work has been split up into several groups; on top of that, ink and pen, a variety of art supplies, such as a ruler have been placed.

And on the other side of the desk, there's a younger Spirit who has the same sleepy face as his.

She looks exactly like a mangaka, and her workspace also looks as messy as a mangaka's.

"Fuua....."

While Shido is yawning, he rubbed his eyes as he walked towards the refrigerator. The refrigerator was filled with lots of nutritional drinks, and then he takes some.

After that, he opens one of them, and then another one. He gives it to the Spirit who is working in the middle of the desk. Probably in this room right now, she's the one who is in the most extreme condition.

".....Natsumi. Why don't you take a rest for a while?"

"....."

But Natsumi kept drawing from her pen on the manuscript, while staring at it with a critical facial expression. Natsumi didn't respond at all. She continued to focus as she placed her nails onto the script so that she will be able to draw a perfect line.

".....Oi~, Natsumi~"

"....."

Still no reaction. Shido opened the lid of the energy drink to try. He then placed a straw in Natsumi's drink.

".....Gu."

Then, Natsumi unexpectedly turned away; she began drinking the energy drink by placing the straw onto her lips.

Then, after she had finished drinking all of the liquid in the bottle, she released her mouth from the straw and continued to work on the manuscript again.

It is impossible to describe her tremendous ability to concentrate. Shido made a wry smile and went back to his desk.

"Well then.....how about working on the next page....."

And then, he gripped the pen while facing the manuscript that still was in draft form.

Then, as if following his lead, Origami and the others also resumed their work.

That's right. Shido, along with the others right now, are working together in unity for a single purpose.

[For the purpose to complete the Manga].



## **Chapter 01: Don't Panic. It's a Spirit's Trap.**

### **Part 1**

Zuuuuuuuuuu.....along with the machine's low sound, the bed was gradually being sucked into a huge inspection machine.

"U....."

There laid Itsuka Shidou, who slowly lowered his eyelids as he closed his eyes.

Up until now, he already received several inspections; as expected, the feeling wasn't really good.

It was a primal fear in all organisms, the fear of being swallowed whole by a huge animal.

After Shido's body was entirely swallowed inside the machine, the light of the x-ray passed through Shido's body.

After few minutes later, the machine finally removed itself from the bed where Shidou had laid down.

"Yes, it's done, Shidou"

"Ng....."

Upon hearing the voice that had come from above, Shidou slowly opened his closed eyes.

Next to the bed, there's a girl standing up with a concerned look. Her hair is tied up with a black ribbon.

And, she is eating chupa-cups in her mouth. If you take a look at those characteristics, the only thing you can feel from her is that she was simply a cute girl.

She is wearing crimson military uniform; her expression was flat. It creates strange impression that she looks too young for the clothes.

It should be it. This girl is none other than Shido's little sister, as well as <Ratatoskr>'s commander, Itsuka Kotori.

"How's your physical condition?"

"Aah, there's nothing wrong. But.....how long should I undertake this? Feels like it's already been half month....."

Shido's made a wry smile and got up. That's right, even until now, after sealing Spirit's Reiryoku he always had to go through this kind of examination; however, recently the period length had been more than usual.

So far now, he himself already understands the mechanism of this machine. The MR1 equipment's machinery and tools gave it an appearance of a huge cross-ways cylinder. The big entrance orifice made it look like a serpent.

Seeing Shidou's reaction, Kotori exhaled.

"Hey.....Shidou, you already understand right? About how's your body condition is?"

"Uhh....."

To be honest, Shidou hesitates to answer.

In the beginning of this month, there's something that interfered with the path between him and the Spirits.

Rather than Spirits' power going berserk, it was Shidou whose power went berserk instead.

It was thanks to the effort of everyone that the problem could be solved. Henceforth, so far Kotori is now paying more attention to Shido's body condition.

"Sorry.....thanks, because I can't remember anything about that time, I don't know what to say....."

Shidou said that in an apologetic manner. Kotori only went "Huh....." and then averted her gaze away from him.

".....Fuu. That's right. I'm sorry."

"Ah, no, that's not what I....."

Seeing Kotori's response, Shidou went into a state of silence.

From then on, the conversation stopped for a few seconds.

Kotori's is showing an unusual attitude. She didn't reply him back with a sarcasm scold like usual. That's because Kotori feels responsible regarding her role to put an end to him.

"Ah....."

Somehow, it's feels uncomfortable. It's not like he wanted to make Kotori angry, but seeing Kotori look so depressed made him feel pain as an older brother.

Shidou changed his body position from the bed, and at the moment he began to move closer towards Kotori.

"What~, don't be so sulky~. Onii-chan is lonely~."

"Wha.....?! W-Wait, what are you doing!"

"Hey~, Kotori~"

"What~, don't be so sulky~. Onii-chan is lonely~."

"Ahh! Don't cling to me!"



Kotori's face turned red, and then Shidou's head receives a chop afterward. Somehow, Kotori's usual mood has come back. Having felt the pain on his head, he strokes his head and laughs a little.

".....What's that, so creepy. Don't you think there's something wrong with you?"

"That's not it; your hit just now means you're already back to your usual self. Thank you Kotori."

After Shidou says that, Kotori's face turned red again. It was extremely obvious. Thus, Shidou patted Kotori's head. Kotori's shoulders shook a little, but she lets Shidou continue to pat her head.

After that, a small sound of someone's call could be heard.

".....Sorry for interrupting you two."

".....!"

Upon hearing that voice, Kotori's body started trembling. Immediately, she snaps Shidou's hand from her head.

"A-Aah Reine, you're pretty fast. Is the result already out?"

And then everyone's facial expression become serious, they come closer to the direction of the voice. Shidou and Kotori walk away together, there's someone looking at them over there.

During that time, there currently stands a woman wearing a <Ratatoskr> uniform. She has long hair put in a simply hairstyle and has an old stuffed teddy bear that she puts in her breast pocket. The stuffed bear has lots of scratches, and the woman's face looks so pale. Her voluptuous breast press together on the bear makes them look even bigger.

Murasame Reine, is an analyst here, as well as Kotori's companion.

".....Yes. This thing is similar to <Fraxinus>; this machinery has a Realizer installed in it as well."

While saying this, Reine's hand pointing out to some documents on the clip board.

".....Look at it, Shin's spiritual energy value from the beginning until now has begun to fall down into the normal state. This equipment wasn't able to detect any abnormal Reiryoku. The current status of the route between you and the Spirits now is normal too. ....With this, you can go back to the usual periodic medical checkup like before."

"Is it true? That's a relief."

Shidou, while saying that, changed his body's position and began stretching his body.

Right now Shidou and the others are inside the underground facility own by <Ratatoskr>. Because <Fraxinus> is still under repair, they had to go to the underground facility for the medical checkups instead.

In addition, half of a month has already passed since that day and now they were reaching the end of the month. Right now the school is in its winter's holiday, after this there's the New Year's holiday. There are various things they can watch. Starting from now, until the end of holiday, they can use their time freely for anything. Thanks to that, Shido can take care of the kitchen properly now.

And, upon seeing Shidou's reaction, ".....But" then Reine continued her words.

".....After this, we should talk something related to your body's condition."

"Eh.....?"

With that worried tone, Shidou's facial expression unintentionally became stern.

"What do you mean.....don't tell me, something happened to the Spirits too!?"

".....No, that's not what I mean. .... It's about the physical measurement record you made when you were sick and your actions when you seduced Ai, Mai, Mii and Miss Okamine during the overheat, which we still have yet to create a story for."

"Buh!"

Hearing Reine's words, Shidou coughed at that instant.

Right. When the path got disturb, Shidou's consciousness became vague. It's like he was half conscious. He heard from others that his behavior become very strange at that time.

".....About the unusual record of the physical measurement, we'll try to deal with it. The 50 meters running record is quite troublesome.....we can say that it might be because of a strong wind blowing back then, or because you accidentally drank a cold medicine, which by any chance contained a extent of a dope inside the ingredients. I think we still have a chance to make up an explanation."

"Well, I don't think it will be that easy, though....."

But, rather than letting others know about the Spirits, Shidou choose to agree with this plan.

However, the real problem is the other one. Reine also understands about this as well. Even until now, this problem is still unsolved.

"As for the Ai, Mai, and Mii case, you can say it was simply a joke. Now there's only one left to be explained. That person is Miss Okamine. In short, we were able to cancel the wedding ceremony reservation....."

"Gwah!"

Upon Reine's unexpected sentence, Shidou started coughing once more.

"W-Wedding ceremony reservation.....!?"



“.....Yes. Somehow, we can explain the condition to her, now she already understands the situation, but still, she wanted to make it clear that it was a mistake right from your mouth. I’ll arrange a place for you to meet her and try to fix this problem within this winter holiday.”

“.....Kuh, this is pretty difficult.....”

A lot of possibilities begin appearing inside Shidou’s mind.

After that, a noise can be heard coming from Reine’s uniform pocket. A pipip sound came from an alarm that was ringing.

“.....Ng, so it’s already time.”

“Do you have another business?”

“.....Yes. Let’s meet again later; we’ll meet in the next appointment.”

“Is that so? Well, I’ll be excusing myself to apologize to that person.”

As Shidou excused himself, Reine assented to his plan and Kotori waved her hand.

“.....Aah. I’m sorry.”

“Perhaps me too, I’ll be returning home during dinner time. Do you need a car?”

“Ng....., I don’t think I need one. I’ll go shopping before I go back to home.”

“Is that so? Then see you later.”

“Yes.”

Shidou waves his hand, and left the room.

After that, he went next door to the locker room to change his clothes. Then, he walks along the hallway in a relax manner.

On the way, he takes out his cell phone from his pocket to confirm the time; it’s not yet 2:00 p.m.

“Ng.....there’s still some time left. Well then, what should I do now.....”

While walking, Shidou’s mind is being filled with what kind of menu he will cook for tonight’s dinner. His footsteps echo in the hallway.

While he’s walking, there’s sound of footsteps coming from the opposite direction approaching Shidou.

“Ooh, Shidou-kun. Are you returning home now?”

“Is the examination finished already?”

The man was wearing gloves and glasses, and while the girl had shoulder’s length hair. The woman was the one who had called out to him. They are < Ratatoskr > members,

Nakatsugawa Munechika and Shiizaki Hinako. They seemed to have just got back from shopping, as they were both holding white vinyl bag on their hands.

“Yes. I’m finally free because my condition has gone back to normal.”

“Haha, that’s good. The body is our most important feature.”

“I think so too. Treasure your body properly.”

“Haha..... I’ll will. Did the both of you just come back from shopping?”

“Yes. In <Fraxinus>, it’s really hard to be able to go out, but in this underground facility, we can go out a lot easier.”

“Aah, sure it is.”

Agreeing, Shidou nodded at them. Near the exit and entrance part in this underground facility is Tengu City’s main section. It is surrounded by many buildings in every spot of the street, as well as civilian homes. The two of them seems to be much happier staying in this place because they can go out easier.

Of course, as <Ratatoskr> members, they can’t let civilians know about the organization. So, Nakatsugawa and the others right now aren’t wearing their <Ratatoskr> uniforms. Instead, they put on a coat which looks more like an ordinary company’s uniform. They also have a name tag on their neck to prove that they’re a company employee.

This way, no one would even think that they’re part on a secret organization at all.

“But, somehow I feel a little bit lonely. As a man, I missed the sensation when I’m doing my duty in the airship. Pushing myself into my own limit! I hope <Fraxinus> will be finish repaired immediately!”

Then, Nakatsugawa gripped his palm to show his fist and his glasses started to glitter. Shido made a wry smile when he sees Nakatsugawa act.....But as a boy, Shidou can understand what Nakatsugawa means by that.

“So.....what the two of you buy then?”

When Shidou asked, the two smiled and showed the contents of the vinyl bag on their hands.

Inside, there’s a lot of sweet stuff that Kotori probably asked them to buy.

“Chupa-Cups, right?”

“Ah, you know already?”

Hearing Shidou’s guess, Shiizaki gave a smile.

“As expected from Onii-chan.”

“I too bought some sweet stuff for stock and this one!”

Next, Nakatsugawa took out a book from the vinyl bag.

It's a Shōnen manga magazine around B5 size paper. The front cover illustration is a boy set up a pose with a sword. On top of that is the printed logo of <Weekly Shōnen Blast>.<sup>1</sup>

"Ng? This is.....Blast?"

"That's right. This is the latest issue they have on sale for today. Has Shidou-kun ever read it before?"

"Of course. That's obvious. In our era, there's no one who has never read this popular magazine."

But, what is that? Shido inclined his head in wonder. Seeing Shidou's reaction, Nakatsugawa pointed out his finger to the bottom left side of the front cover.

"What's do you mean, this is.....Eeh?"

Not believing what he just saw, Shidou took a closely look once more.

Seeing his reaction, Nakatsugawa nodded in satisfaction.

"Right. After hiatus for a long time, Honjou Souji's series [SILVER BULLET], has just resumed publication this month!"

"Ah, you're right. I used to read this one too. For some reason several years ago, this series suddenly stopped publishing, and after that it has never been publish in the magazine for a long time. Right?"

"Right! The author and the publisher picked up the series again. It said the reason for the hiatus was because of the sudden illness of the author, but in fact, that was only a makeup thing created for Honjou to get to work again! For this kind of thing to be happening..... Itoo still can't believe this, for me to be able to read the continuation of [SILVER BULLET] is an unbelievable thing that I've never even thought of before.....!"

"Ha~, Uwaah~, How nostalgic."

Interested, Shidou and Nakatsugawa continue with their heated discussion, Shiizaki knits her eyebrows, and then took out a cell phone from her pocket and brought it closer to her ear.

"Yes, this is Shiizaki speaking.....Aah, yes, understood. We'll be there right away."

Shiizaki ended the call. She apologize to Shido says that they have to leave.

"I'm so sorry, we have to go now. Here, can we leave this to you for commander?"

After saying that, she raised her hand, and hands the shopping bag to him. Shido took the bag and agreed to give it to Kotori.

"It's alright. You can focus on your work."

"Thank you very much. We're saved. Well then....."



Shiizaki bowed to him, then she walks in a hurry to the opposite direction and vanished from his sight. Seeing her off, Nakatsugawa also bid his farewell to him.

“Then, I’ll excuse myself too. Before the break time is over, I’ll finish reading the [SILVER BULLET]!”

“Haha.....Then, see you later.”

After Shidou said good bye to him, he walks to the opposite direction with Shiizaki already gone by now.

“Then~ let’s hurry up deliver this to her.”

Because the shopping bag Shidou bring in his hand is light, he came back in no time at all; the door of the room is already opened.

“Oi~, Kotori. This is your order from Shiizaki-san,.....Eh.”

Instantly, Shidou’s body froze.

But that reaction is normal. Inside the room there’s Kotori and Reine, but was also a girl being gripped tightly.....Kotori abruptly threw the girl into the bed and was violently trying to remove the girl’s hospital clothes.

“Kya~!Kyaaaaaaaa!”

“You! Be obedient.....! Take off your clothes!”

“Ko, Kotori....?”

Right in front of his eyes now, there’s a flower garden. Shidou’s heartbeat started beating faster. Kotori began to notice Shidou’s presence. Recognizing him, Kotori’s shoulders started to shake.

“S-Shidou!? Didn’t you leave already?”

“W-well, just now I was about to deliver your ordered goods.....”

Shidou averted his gaze away from her.

“How should I say.....sorry. But, forcing against someone’s will isn’t a good thing, you know.....”

“You’re completely misunderstanding!”

Kotori tries to explain. She fixes the girl’s cloth that is lying on the bed. She draws her hand from that girl and get up until Shidou can see the girl.

That girl looks like around Kotori’s age. Her hair tied up into one ponytail, and there’s a small mole below her left eye.

She wears the same hospital clothes that Shido had worn previously. There’s only one reason for her to wear that. The girl’s physical condition must not be in good terms.

Looking at the figure, Shidou widened his eyes.

"Mana!?"

"Eh.....?Ah, Nii-sama!"

The girl responded with a surprise tone.

Right over there now, there's a girl who self-proclaimed herself to be Shidou's blood related little sister, her name is Takamiya Mana.

"Yes. There's nothing in particular. Right now I just think that we should do a detail examination on her, but this girl keeps refusing."

"There's no need, because Mana didn't feel sick anywhere~ that's all! That's why I'm alright!"

"....."

Kotori glared at Mana. Mana made a wry smile and sweat ran down her cheeks.

Come to think of it, he begins to remember. Back then when Shidou's Reiryoku went berserk, DEM came to attack him. He heard that Mana managed to come just in time before anything could happen.

"I see.....You helped me too. Thank you, Mana."

"Nii-sama....."

Hearing Shidou's word, Mana made a \*Nii\* smile before she stood up.

"What are you talking about? Mana and Nii-sama aren't strangers; there is no need to say that!"

"Haha.....That's right."

Shidou replied with a smile.

Then Mana, who was smiling brightly, suddenly changed her facial expression into very serious one. She was slowly walking and continued to advance while staring at Shido.

"By the way, Nii-sama. There's something I wanted to ask if I were to meet Nii-sama....."

"Ng, what is it?"

"Yes. About what Nii-sama said back then-"

But something interrupts Mana before she could finish her sentence. Kotori went  
"Ngh....."

Kotori laughed in strange way and placed her arms on Mana's shoulders.

"Maaaaaanaaaa? Why are you running away like that while you're talking to Shidou?"

"Eh? Ah, no, I wasn't trying to escape or something....."

Even though Kotori is acting very friendly, somehow there's something really cold that can be sensed between her words. Mana's face became pale. Despite Shidou not being able to see Kotori's face from his current position, somehow he knew that Kotori right now must be having a very scary expression.

However, Kotori only sighed.

"Don't misunderstand. It's not like I'm angry or such. Right now, if you weren't there at that time, I don't know what would happen then. And I'm truly grateful for that.

Mana felt Kotori's feeling behind her words, Mana relaxed herself a little bit upon seeing this; suddenly Kotori put more strength in her grip on Mana's shoulder.

"That's why, there's no need for you to be afraid. So don't be so scared. About the fact that you went out without caring about your body, or about recklessly using a Realizer, or the fact that you went uncontactable after, and yet exchange contact with Reine without me knowing, I'm not bothered by it even a liiiiiiiiitle bit."

"H-Hiiiiiiii!?"

Kotori's fingers gripped onto Mana's shoulders tightly. Tears started to flow down from Mana's eyes and she swings her head repeatedly.

"H-Hey, Kotori.....Don't worry too much, okay?"

Hearing Shidou, Kotori turned back and glared at him.

"To hear such a thing from you, how can I put this, I don't know anyone who would do reckless things like you siblings do."

"Ugh....."

"That's....."

Both Shidou and Mana cannot deny that and stopped their sentences. With this, they are back to the previous matter.

Looking at their reaction, Kotori can only sigh. Then, she turns back to staring at Mana again.

"Anyhow, don't try to escape this time, okay. You should finish this examination, and you'll receive proper treatment. Be prepared. We'll examine you even to places that you didn't even know about yourself."

"Kyaaa~!Kyaaaaaaaaa!"

While saying that, Kotori continued to grab Mana's shoulder. Mana's feet began to shake and she started screaming.

"Nii-samaaaa! Save meeeee!"

"No, it's not good to running away..... See you later."



## Part 2

Despite of Mana's screams, Shidou takes the shopping bag nearby, then he walks out from the inspection room and rides the elevator. He passes three layers of electronic doors and finally appears inside a public building. Compared to interior design of the secret underground facility, the outer part looks ordinary.

Then Shidou remembered what should he do right now.

"Next....."

A certain place came up in Shidou's mind as he continued to walk.

Even though it's only one day after Christmas, the shopping district's street decorations have already changed from a western-style into a very Japanese-style. The Christmas tree which was lined up in front of the stores has already been exchanged with a row of New Year's decorations, hinting that the New Year is almost here. Not only that, even Santa Claus and his Reindeers are also nowhere to be seen anymore. Only packages of cake on the top of shelf are still left, even though it does not suit the mood right now.

This instant change isn't something that has happened for the first time. In fact, this happen every year, but then again he thought it's an interesting phenomenon. After all, various people who had been celebrating the holy night until the other day are now already back to their daily lives and waiting for the New Year. Although there are several national festivals that don't relate with Japanese religions; until now, those festivals have been included in a big event for about one week so far. At that time, everyone will be quite busy. That is inevitable.

Shidou, while walking on the street, looked at the store's decorations that are filled with the New Year's mood, and then he made a \*fuu\* sound while exhaling.

"Even though this is something that happens every year.....This instant change still feels impressive. People's moods sure change so fast."

Even if he says so, it's not like Shidou is complaining about it at all. No, rather, he's also welcoming this event anyway.

Seeing the town being very lively is a good thing, and above all in this period, there are lots of rare ingredients being displayed in front of the stores. There are also so many discount offers during this time. Just by looking at it, he felt that he can have much more fun with his cooking.

"By the way, what should I do now....."

Shidou placed his hand on his chin while thinking. He thinks that he should make something less for tonight's dinner than what he made during Christmas. Besides, New Year's Eve and the New Year will arrive in a few days. Even if <Ratatoskr > said that they will pay for the cost of food, eating too much will not be good for the body either.

He decided that he won't cook too much, but Shidou made up his mind that he will cook a delicious menu for today as well.

"Perhaps a Japanese menu will be good..... Recently I haven't eaten fish at all."

Speaking to himself with cheerful tone, he nodded before saying it was okay.

The time is already 2:30 p.m. The sun is still rising towards the highest spot. However, the temperature is rather low due to the fact that it is now the last week of December. Thanks to last summer, he already knows some ingredients that he must buy. He goes to a store that is familiar to him. When looking around; he collects everything he needs to buy.

“.....Okay. It’s here, isn’t it?”

About thirty minutes later, Shidou finished buying all the ingredients for dinner. After that, he headed back to home from shopping district by walking.

Then...

“.....Ng?”

Suddenly, Shidou stopped around the corner of the street.

But that’s normal. In front of Shidou right now, there’s a girl that has fallen unconscious on the street.

“Wha.....!?”

Looking at the unexpected situation, Shidou’s shoulder trembled.

“A, Are you alright!?”

He rushed to the girl’s place. Placing the shopping bag on the street, he tried to help her stand up.

But, Shidou stopped his hands. It is said that if you happen to find someone fallen on the street, then it is better not to move their body recklessly. If this girl is victim of a traffic accident and had hit her head somewhere, changing her posture will likely become very fatal.

Then, while Shidou wonders what he should do, the girl unexpectedly moves her fingertips.

After that, she slowly raises her head up unsteadily. Thereby, the face of the girl who had kissed the ground began to show.

From her appearance, she might be one or two years older than Shidou. Her eyes look tired and her lips look dry. Looking at her face, the color of fatigue can be seen clearly. Her eyes bags looks heavy and dark circles surround her eyes. Rather than being hit by a car in a traffic accident, it’s more convincing to say that she had collapsed due to overwork.

Realizing that the girl is still consciousness, Shidou supported the girl’s shoulders, as tries to help her stand up.

He can’t tell very well because he can only see her back side, but apparently the girl was only wear a coat on top of her room clothes. That’s how she dressed up. In addition, under this cold weather, the girl only wears pair of sandals without wearing any stockings at all.

Perhaps she's someone who lives nearby, because this girl dares to go outside in this kind of style without worrying about the cold. Occasionally, Shidou also dresses up in the same style when he goes to a nearby convenient store in the middle of the night.

Then, the girl focused her eyes to look at Shidou's face and moved her lips to speak. Then, she lets out a voice that sounds similar to a crying tone.

"———— mach, ————— ty....."

"Eh? W-What did you say? What happened?"

While Shidou is listening again, the girl once again repeats the same sentence.

".....My stomach is empty....."

"..... Huh?"

Upon hearing this, Shidou widened his eyes unintentionally. Then, from the girl's stomach came out a sound, \*Guu, \*Kruuuu..... That's how it sounds.

Then a few minutes later, Shidou is supporting the girl who had fallen on the ground. They walk along the path guided by Shidou.

".....Ng~, so sorry~, boy....."

The girl that Shidou is piggybacking on his back let out a voice without any vigor.

In the end, although her consciousness has returned, she insisted that she cannot move due to her empty stomach, so Shidou has no other choice than to escort her to her home.

"Don't mind it..... Besides, are you really alright? Is it alright for you to not go to the hospital instead?"

"Yes~, Alright~ Alright~. I'm not sick at all. Moreover, wouldn't it waste so much time only to get there?"

After saying that, the girl waved and fluttered her hands.

"By the way, no need to use honorifics like that~ I don't like being too formal~"

"Aah..... I understand."

"Hey~, you still haven't change the way you speak."

"I-I.....get it."

With that tone, Shidou replied to her while sweating.

Contrary to the girl's slender appearance, her personality is quite bold, such an unpredictable girl.

Besides, collapsing from hunger in an advance country like Japan nowadays is an uncommon thing. However, this unpredictable scene was just too surprising; he has not



even heard her circumstances yet. It makes him wonder what in the world had happened to her.

“Ah, please go to the mansion over there.”

While Shidou is thinking, the girl raised her right arm and points to the opposite direction from where they are now.

Shidou widened his eyes once his gaze follows the direction that the girl's fingertip pointed just now.

Over there, there's a high building, which height is seemingly twice taller than any other building. It was a high-rise mansion.

“Eh? Over here?”

“Hmm.....That's right..... Ah, don't tell me you were expecting me to live in a more worn-out apartment?”

“N-No, I didn't think.....”

Shidou hesitated to answer for a moment. In fact, her guess was correct.

Basically, the higher the mansion's height is, the higher the price will be. Looking at this girl's appearance; in truth, he cannot match her appearance with the luxurious image of the mansion before his eyes.

“Ehehe.....Come on, that's nothing. How should I put this? You see, it's a gap. Something like that also happen to you, right? Just like any other ordinary teenager.”

“.....Uhm, that's, I'm not quite getting it.”

Shidou knitted his eyebrows while replying to her.....Somehow, talking about the gap, he still cannot grasp this girl personality at all.

“—— Ah, boy, I'm sorry but can you please bring me to my room? I don't know why, but for some reason my legs cannot move~. Is it because I rarely use my legs that they got some kind of degeneration~?”

“Aah, I think I can.....Are you sure it's okay for you to not go to hospital?”

It's not like he has another urgent matter to do, so he doesn't have any reason to refuse anyway. And moreover, if he leaves this girl in this place, there's a chance that she will collapse and die on the street and he will feel bad if that happen.....

Normally thinking, such a thing should be impossible to happen. Something like this would only happen in Manga, even though such a Manga situation did happen to this girl. Sometimes such a thing could be happen in real life as well.

Shidou, while piggybacking the girl, walked through the mansion's entrance. Then, they arrive in front of the auto locked door.

“Then.....”

In such a high class mansion, they have auto lock that must be unlocked beforehand. But, the pin number should only be known by those who reside here, and the person in question couldn't type the pin number from Shidou's back.

Perhaps, peeking over the security isn't something very admirable, but the current situation made him have no other choice. Then, Shidou talks to the girl that he brought on his back.

"I will close my eyes, so during that moment....."

"Ah, the room number is 1801, and the pin number is 1234, okay."

"Security!?"

Dumbfounded by the girl's words, Shidou unintentionally let out a strange voice.

"Eh, what's with that shout just now? It's super amusing. Do it once more, once more."

"Forget that! You shouldn't let others know stuff like that so easily!"

"Eh? Why?"

The girl asked back in a surprised manner. Shidou scratched his head in stress and continued talking.

"That's not good for security, isn't it? If someone else other than the residence knows the password, then he can come in and out freely! We just met for the first time, and I'm a boy you know!"

Shidou explained his theory in a high pitch voice; the girl then went "Oh" and covers her mouth with her hand.

"Will you do that, boy? No way, that's so surprising."

"I won't! I'm only telling you the common thing!"

".....Ah~, I see. Even though you looked like an herbivore, you're actually a carnivore .....Perhaps this is what you call a gap. I'm a bit wiser now."

"Are you even listening when others are talking to you!?"

"I'm listening, I'm listening. I'm super listening..... Anyway, I only wanted to know for reference, if a boy went to a girl's room, what's the first thing he would do?"

"You really are not listening, aren't you!?"

Shidou raised his voice to the girl while shouting, suddenly he feels like someone's currently watching over them somewhere place.

"Ng.....?"

And over there, there's someone staring at him with a sharp gaze.....Because of that, his body began shaking.

There, stood up a figure of a woman. That woman is this mansion's manager.....Seemingly, she's the mansion caretaker. Because Shidou and the girl are making a ruckus in front of the entrance of the mansion's lobby, she looks at them with suspicious glance. The woman seemingly intends to call the police, because she's gripping the phone right now.

"A, Ahaha....."

Shidou made a feeble and insincere smile, he input the room's pin number he heard from the girl earlier, then immediately the automatic door opened.

".....I'm coming in."

"Aye-aye, Sir~"

The girl responded with a carefree tone. Shidou exhaled, and then he walks away from the lobby and towards the corridor.

After that, he took the elevator. He can see the wonderful decoration of the room below before heading to the designated room.

".....Hey, we arrived. Is it okay if I put you down here?"

"Ng~, thank you. But if you leave me like this, I'll surely be dead later."

".....Ha. Well then, give me the key. I'll open it."

"Roger that. Ah, but the key is inside my butt pocket, so please take it gently~"

"Why did you put it there!?"

Shidou shouted as the girl tangles her arms to Shidou's neck.

"I didn't mean anything bad you know. I only wanted to show my gratitude for helping me on the street, so I think I should give you a little service to refresh you. Even if you put your hand into the wrong place like the inside of my clothes, I'm okay if it's in the upper part of my pants."

"What are you even saying!?"

"Ng~, No~ Well~, I think I wanted to show my gratitude at least, so I keep 'pushing' mine to you this whole time, but you didn't show any reaction at all~. Oh, perhaps this boy has butt fetish? That's what I thought."

"Your concern has exceeded common sense!?"

"Ah, or maybe boy is only interested on huge breasts? You're not interested on a bust below 80 cm? I'm sorry about that~. I really can't do anything about this~"

"Can you not put someone else into your strange fetishes?"

Shidou kept shouting for a while, and then once again, he lets out a large sigh.

"Forget that, just handover the key. Or I'll leave you here."

“Aw, Seems like I have no choice~”

After saying that, the girl put her hand into her butt pocket.

“Ah....., Out of sudden.....Kya.....”

“Don’t make a strange voice behind someone’s back, okay.....”

“What’s that, your no fun.”

The girl puffed her cheeks, then she handovers the key. Shidou opened the door and came inside the room.

“I’m sorry for disturbing.”

“I forgive you for disturbing~”

“.....”

“Eh, you’re not act as Tsukkomi anymore?”<sup>2</sup>

Ignoring the girl’s voce, Shidou took off his shoes before entering the room.

From the entrance way, there is a long corridor. Over there, the room is dotted with mountains of magazines and Manga.

“Then, where’s the bedroom?”

“There~”

After the girl pointing out the direction, he walks towards the room.

Again, the girl’s bedroom is covered with tons of Manga. Almost the entire wall has transformed into bookshelves, but still in the very end, the books only piled up high inside the room.

The girl’s bed is even worse. There’s a bed in the middle of the large room, but it seems to have space for one person only. On top of that, the room is scattered with volumes of books. Overall, she seems to harbor a great liking towards books, since her bed looks like a prepared a casket specially made for a deceased person to use books instead of flowers.

“Uh, wait.”

While Shidou stands in front of the bed for a moment, the girl moves her body from his back to the bed. Falling down just like slime and in a manner of a puzzle piece, she laid down on the bed lovingly.

“Ng~, finally we arrived.”

“Haa.....”

Then, after finally laying down the girl, Shidou exhaled. He looked around the interior of the room and discovers something inside.

"This is....."

Even though it's rude for looking around a girl's room he just met, he can't win against his curiosity. He walks forward to a certain place; over there he sees something unbelievable. That is quite a large workspace. There's various painting equipment lining, also a big fluorescent lamp which could illuminate the whole table's surface.

On top of that, there is a thick B4 size paper on the center of the desk. Its coma script, there is not only already a drawn character and background, but also there's some text written on it. It seems finished and almost ready for the inking, since the rough sketch drawn by pencil hasn't been erased yet.

Right———— This is the first time Shidou saw this directly, no doubt about it.

And what's over there is the so called Manga paper manuscript.

"Eh, perhaps, are you drawing Manga?"

Shidou asked the girl who was sleeping peacefully on the bed like a corpse. Then, she raised her hand.

"Ng——? That's right. I am a pro.....I got too focused with my work that I forgot to eat~.....I thought I had no choice other than to go to nearby convenient store or to supermarket. Then, I realized that the earth's gravity became stronger."

After saying that, she raised up her hand before dropping it back down onto the bed. Shidou made a dumbfounded face and smiled bitterly.

"So, that's what happened.....But if you are a pro, don't you have an assistant....."

"Ng—— Generally, that's how it is but, I like doing everything just by myself until it's finished~ Well, if you feel comfortable doing that alone, then it's fine. Though sometimes, I feel as if I'm going to die."

"But I think it's a fatal mistake....."

Shidou scratched his cheeks before taking another look at the Manga manuscript on the desk.

It's not like Shidou read the whole Manga book wildly just like a mania or such, but Shidou also likes to read Manga just like any other normal high school student. He even bought Manga books that he likes. However, this was the first time he has seen a raw manuscript, so it is a pretty exciting experience.

Guessing from the artwork, this is a Shōnen Manga. Even though it's still not completely finished, he can tell that she truly is a pro-

".....Hmm?"

Then, Shidou knitted his eyebrows; he bends his body forward and brings his face closer to take a look at the manuscript more closely.

Because the script hasn't been finished yet, he's not so sure. However, he recognized that style somewhere.



“.....Eh, this is, don't tell me [SILVER BULLET]!?”

Shidou shouted at that instant. Right. Over there is the Manga Nakatsugawa talked about earlier [SILVER BULLET].

“Oh? You know very well. Perhaps, you're one of my readers? Thank you~”

The girl waved one of her hand again, Shidou become even more curious. He turns his body's direction and continued asking.

“No, wait a minute. Does that mean you're Honjou Souji.....?”

“Ng~, right~”

“Y-You're not a man?”

“Ah~, that? It's a pen name, a pen name. My real name is Nia. Honjou Nia. Nice to meet you~”

After saying that, the girl named Nia flashed a smile that made a “Nii” sound, and then continues.

“It's pretty common, you know. There are quite number of female writers doing that when writing Shōnen manga. For example, Takajou-san of [OTHER FAKE] is actually a woman too.”

“Eh!? I-Is that true!?”

Upon hearing this information, Shidou widened his eyes..... Then he continued thinking.

Other than about the gender issue earlier, he found something even stranger still left.

“No-no-no.....It's still strange. Because [SILVER BULLET] is a Manga that has existed around the time when I was still in elementary school, you know? That means Honjou Souji's debut work is even older than that.....”

Shidou shouting again made his throat shake. He looks at Nia's appearance again.

Her possible age is about 18 or 19 years old..... No matter how successful her makeup is to make herself look younger, being in her twenties is the limit. If this girl's actual age really is 30 years old, that youthful appearance is something that everyone would always wish for. There's no mistaking that every beauty company and TV Channel would approach her to take advantage of this.

In this case, she must be Honjou Souji's daughter who has the same perfect drawing style and inherited the same name with him as the second generation..... There are also some people who are doing the same thing.

However, Nia can see through what Shidou is thinking, she then says \*fufu\*, while shrugging her shoulders.

“I'm sorry but, since the beginning until now, Honjou Souji and I am the same person. By the way, it's already been around ten years since my debut work.”

“T-Ten years.....”

Shidou was dumbfounded by her explanation, Nia’s truth echoed like the sounds of a drum; Shidou turned his face wondering about such a theory.

Normally thinking, such a thing should be impossible. The possibility of this entire theory being only part of Nia’s random speech is pretty high.

But, the manuscript placed on the work desk is obviously Honjou’s drawing style. Of course, there’s also possibility that those are only copies of the original drawing. However, if this Manga really got published by [BLAST], it will be evidence for the manuscript’s originality.

While Shidou was thinking about that, Nia went \*Oh, well~\* and exhaled.

“Uhm~.....The sequence is a little bit different from what I wanted, but oh well, it’s alright. ~I’ll tell you. My secret is-”

“Eh....?”

Hearing Nia’s words, Shidou shrugged his shoulder a little.

It’s true that he is curious about it, but..... Whatever is it, will it be alright to tell it to a complete stranger like Shidou? That question is what popped up inside his mind.

“Actually~”

However, a moment later...

Gu~.....Kyurururururu.....

That voice came out from Nia’s stomach louder than before.

Furthermore, since she was about to talk about a serious matter, she created such a serious face to show that the situation earlier is becoming pretty surreal.

“B-Boy.....”

Nia called for Shidou in a weak voice. Shidou exhaled and scratched his head.

“Okay, okay..... I’ll borrow your kitchen for a while.”

“Yes~.....”

Then, Shidou walked out from the room, but he quickly turns back to Nia.

“.....I only wanted to hear this to make sure. You can eat ordinary food, right? You’re not sucking blood in order to maintain your youthful appearance, right?”

"Eh? You'll let me suck your blood?"

Then, Nia tries to imitate carnivorous animal by bending her finger from both hands, “Gaah~” and then she flashes her teeth. But, soon she loses her physical strength and falls down.

“.....For now, I'll accept that answer as a yes.”

Shidou said that with his eyes half-opened. He left the room and walked alone to the kitchen.

Looking at Nia's manners, he expected the sink to be filled with dirty dishes. However, apart from the dusty tableware, the kitchen is unexpectedly well-organized.

“Heee. How surprising.....I know it's rude to say this, but this is pretty well-organized.”

But, a moment later, Shidou changed his earlier impression. Looking at the surface of kitchen's table pretty confirm it. In the corner of the room, he can see instant food rubbish from a convenient store.

In other words, instead of Nia never tidying up this place, it seems she never used the kitchen in the first place. She must always be eating outside or buying a box lunch from a convenient store. In short, she must always eat instant foods for every meal.

“.....”

Shidou kept his silence and put his hand on his forehead. He soaked the table and began wiping the surface of the kitchen's table with some kind of cloth.

“Well.....Now.”

After he had finished cleaning the dirt, he looked around the kitchen and walked to open the refrigerator,

“.....O-Only sake.....?”

Shidou voices his disbelief at what he just saw, and then he pulls the vegetables drawer to take a look. There are only bottles of sake inside, also several books covering them.

“.....”

Shidou silently closed the refrigerator. He goes back to the entranceway and takes the shopping bag he brought earlier, and decides to choose some suitable ingredients before returning to the kitchen. Originally, these are meant for Spirits' dinner, but.....since the quantity he bought is more than usual, it should be alright. And more importantly, he can't let this Nia girl starve to death.

Shidou washed his hands, and then started cooking like he usually does. Though, there was not much kitchenware he could use, so was it's impossible to make a delicious meal. Also, there's not much time left for cook because he cannot let Nia wait for too long.

After Shidou decided, he poured some water into the only available small saucepan in the kitchen. Then, he also put in uncooked rice into the water, and he lit the fire to start cooking.

After that, he places some scallions into the place where the fire was lit, as well as some bean paste. He also added some Japanese sake that he borrowed from refrigerator to add some flavor. At the very last step, he dropped some eggs into the mixture to complete a simple soup.

In this case, right now the food had finished cooking in only a short time. He brought the food to Nia, who currently starving to death. Despite the fact that this is only an ordinary menu, he thinks this food will be good enough for that girl.

“Okay, I hope this is enough.”

After Shidou says that, he returns to the previous room to deliver the bowl filled with Zousui.<sup>3</sup>

“Here, I finished. It’s still hot, so be careful.”

“Waa! I’ll have some~!”

Shidou put the Zousui on the table near the bed, Nia then \*Pan!\* clapping her hands. And with a bit of vigor she takes the Zousui.

“Whoaaa!”

Of course, the food is still hot. Nia’s body shook a little.

“I already told you right.....”

“Fuu~, Fuu~”

Learning from her earlier mistake now, Nia blew the spoon with her breath before transferring the food into her mouth.

After that, she tastes the Zousui while chewing it inside her mouth, and then she let out a voice.

“Aaaa~.....”

Nia made a voice that sounded completely like an old man in a hot spring. Tears started flowing down from her eyes due to being overwhelmed by the sensation of the food. She kept moving her spoon.

“So delicious.....What did you just let me eat.....What.....”

While saying these words, she continues eating the remaining Zousui. After five minutes had passed, the Zousui’s bowl was already empty.

“Fuh~ Thanks for the meal. No~, that was delicious. It’s been a week since the last time I ate a warm meal.”

“A week.....”

Shidou made a wry smile and then cleaned up the tableware. He turns back as he is about to open the door to return to the kitchen.

“Well, I’ll wash the dishes, after that I’ll go home. Starting from now on, please eat properly before you collapse again.”

“Ah~, wait a minute.”

Then, as Shidou was about to walk out from the room, Nia let out a voice.

“Is that not enough? I’m sorry but, those ingredients are originally for the dinner at my home. If you want more, just order from delivery.”

“Ah~ That’s not it! That’s not what I meant.”

Then Nia made a \*Bung-Bung\* sound while waving her hands, she raise her right hand and pointed to the unfinished drawing manuscript that was placed on top of the desk.

“Like I said before, I didn’t hire any assistants. Is it alright if it’s only a simple task, would you help me? Please! I’ll pay you extra for that.”

“.....Eh?”

Being asked an unexpected request, Shidou widened his eyes.

But he should refuse Nia’s unreasonable request right after just cooking the meal.

“N-No-no-no. What are you talking about? That’s totally impossible.”

“Eh~, isn’t that fine~. Do you have anything else to do?”

“No, that’s not what I’m trying to say.....I’ve never touch a pro’s manuscript before, I can’t take the responsibilities if I made any mistake.”

“It’s alright~, it’s alright~. I’m only asking you to do the erasing. You only have to put some strength to do that.”

“Even if you say so.....”

“Please, please, please! Currently my hands already full with important jobs to be done~. In this case, I won’t be able to finish the manuscript on time.....”

Nia kept pleading to him, Shidou made a large sigh.

“.....Haa. Okay, but only a simple task, alright?”

After Shidou gave into her argument, Nia then started smiling gladly.

“Got it~, got it~. Well then, let’s go to the workroom. As expected, this place is too small to be of use for the two of us~.”

While saying that, Nia get up from the bed, then “Nggggh.....”

She scratched her body. After acting lazily until just now, the girl had already gained back her energy extremely fast.

“The work room.....do you have another place other than this one?”

“Yes. I prepared everything like this, so whenever I feel like I’m going to die while working I can collapse right away, but I also have another workroom to use~”

“Even if you say it as if that was a normal thing, it’s still strange.”



Shidou half closed his eyes when he said that, Nia seemingly doesn't particularly pay attention to it. After that, Shidou follows Nia to the other workroom.

"Well, come in, come in."

"Wah....."

Nia asks Shidou to enter the workroom, the scenery made Shidou widen his eyes.

Inside the room, there's a big work desk placed; on top of it, there's various stationery prepared. The wall still looks the same with the previous one, where the whole surface of the wall was turned into bookshelves. Other than that, there's drawing materials, books of paintings, as well as book of photographs and etc. all lined up.

Inside the room, there is a stoic atmosphere somehow. The appearance of this place surely is just like an artist's workplace.

"There, you can use that desk."

"Eh, is it alright? Somehow the atmosphere makes it feel like this is an artist's sacred place....."

"That's fine, that's fine. Ah, or perhaps you like the desk in the previous room better? Do you want to smell my scent while working?"

"Ah, this place is fine too."

Shidou refused instantly, the girl seems to be dissatisfied and her lips made a "Buu~" sound as she pursed her lips.

"Well, which part should I erase?"

"Aah, then please erase this part."

After Shidou asked, Nia wears her glasses and began marking the upper part of the paper. She's pointing out several sheets of manuscripts that had already been inked.

"After you finished erasing the draft, please fill up the blank space with black ink."

".....Ng?"

Nia said those words naturally, Shidou inclined his head.

"W-wait a minute! Didn't you want me to do only Gomu-kake!? Even if it's Beta-nuri, you shouldn't let an amateur do it!"<sup>4</sup>

"Fine~, fine~. Since you're pretty skillful, you'll somehow be able to do it. Anyhow, as long as you paint them with black color, you can freely use any painting tools. The trick is to paint small corners with the fine tip pen first, and then do the larger part with something quick.

"No, wait, are you listening when other people are talking.....?"

"I'm listening~. But as I said, it's alright. Boy, you've used painting tools before, right?"

“Huh.....? Wh-What, out of the blue.....”

Hearing those sudden words, Shidou’s face suddenly turned pale.

Then, Nia lifted up the tip of her lips and continued speaking.

“You know? Boy. For those who don’t know anything about Manga, They won’t call erasing as [Gomu-kake], or black as [Beta].”

“.....tch!”

Whispering, Shidou held his breath.

“T-That’s.....”

“Perhaps that’s it, right? When you’re still around middle school, you drew an illustration of your own original character that you created. No~, I get it, I get it. At first, you drew that on your note book using pencil. Then, one day you decided to go to a stationery store to buy a Manga pen as well as the ink, but then you found it pretty difficult to use.”

“!? N-No, I.....”

“Then, you thought that you wanted to use screen tone too but, ‘It can’t be, why is the price for one sheet so expensive, even though it can only be used once!’ Then you gave up after said that.”

“G-Guu.....”

“After that, once you found out that there’s a method to use a computer for drawing. That way I can draw as much as I like! That’s what you thought, but you got really shocked once you found out the price for the pen tablet and the software, right?”

“A-Aaaaaaaaaah.....!”

Shidou’s body started trembling as he scratched his head.

“And then.....”

“Ok, I got it! I’ll do it, no need to say more. Please.”

“Then, I’ll count on you boy! And I’ll be working over there.”

Shidou said that with a displeased tone, Nia started laughing upon seeing that and gave him a thumbs up while walking back to her bedroom.

“Oh, my.....”

Shidou let out a sigh, \*Phew\*.

But, it can’t be helped. Then, he sits down on the chair; he gripped the eraser on his hand and carefully began to erase the pencil traces.

After that, he took the Fude-pen in his hand and began working on Beta-nuri like she instructed.

He started painting the part given an x-mark using Fude-pen, with the direction from the inside to the edge part. After that, he began painting the entire surface.

Even if he is only repeating the same work, but the shape and range to paint is various.

Overwhelmed by the pressure that he shouldn't ruin a pro's manuscript had made Shidou somehow feel nervous. As he was completing the work, he tries to finish it as soon as possible.

After sometimes has passed, Shidou brought the finished beta inking manuscript in his hands, then goes to Nia's place.

"Oh, are you done already? Hee~, Aren't you quite skillful?"

".....Aah, somehow I was able to manage it. Man, it's been a while since the last time I'm handling such a delicate thing like this."

Exhaling, he continues moving his body slowly and turns his shoulders.

Then, when he looks over there, Shidou's face turned pale as his body started trembling.

"Wha.....!?"

There's no mistake. Over there, Nia already changed her room clothes she was wearing until now. She changed into a maid cloth which had lots of exposure. The skirt is really short, and parts of her breasts are exposed a lot. Looking at the sensational appearance, Shidou gulped down his saliva.

"W-What are you wearing....."

"Eh? Aah, I bought this for my job's reference; I decided that I'll give you service for your assistance. Look, doesn't the extra salary look quite lustful? How is this? Even though my breasts are flat, my style isn't really that bad, right?"

"I didn't think that this is what you meant by extra?"

Placing her hands on her hip, Nia raised her voice. After that, Nia fluttered the envelope in her hand.

"I'm joking. This is only fan service. Here's your salary."

Then, Nia went to hand over the envelope to Shidou, but something popped up in her mind.

After that, a prankster smile appears on her face, she pulling the breast part of her maid cloth, and put the envelope between her breasts.

"Well, boy. Here's your salary."

"Wai.....What are you doing!?"

"It's fine~, it's fine~, look-look, take them."

After saying that, Nia joins her shoulders to emphasize her breasts.

Then, \*suton\*, the envelope slipped and fell down through her skirt.

“.....”

“Ah.....”

Shidou spoke in a small voice, Nia got so shocked that she collapse onto the place she was standing.

“Ku....., is having small breasts really a crime.....!?”





“.....Err, I should go home right now.”

Shidou excused himself while sweating, he start preparing his stuff before going back. Somehow at this rate, he won't be able to get back to his home anymore.

“Eh? What about the salary?”

“That's fine, there's no need. I also got to have a precious experience anyway.”

“Eeh~ You can't do that~. Look, buy more delicious food using this money.”

“It should be Nia who should properly buy food to eat, regardless if it's delicious or not.”

Shidou said that with half eyes closed, Nia widen her eyes in surprise.

“Uwah, I didn't see this one coming.”

“I didn't particularly mean anything.....Well good bye. Next time, don't collapse on the street again.”

Then, Shidou waved his hand and made his way to leave the room. Nia not knowing what to do began pulling Shidou's shirt.

“Wa-Wa-Wa-Wait a minute. I feel it can't be settled just like this.”

“Even if you say that.....”

Shidou created a bothered face. Then Nia made a \*Pon\* sound as she clapped her hands.

“Ah, well how about this. Boy, are you free this Saturday?”

“Ng.....? Why so suddenly.”

“I'll have a one day holiday after finishing this manuscript. Let's go on a date. Aah, of course I'll be the one who pay everything.”

“Eh.....?”

After hearing the unexpected words, Shidou widens his eyes. Who knows, he didn't expect that he would get that kind of proposal.

“Ah, but in exchange, let me decide the location. Since I haven't gotten any chance to go shopping this lately, I want to go to Akiba~”<sup>5</sup>

With nonchalant tone, Nia was smiling. Shidou let out a sigh and scratched his head.

“.....That's, are you saying that you wanted me to carry your luggage?”

“Giku!”

Nia shocked expression was displayed in an over the top reaction and then she paused for a while. This is the first time Shidou ever heard a “Giku” sound come out from someone's mouth.

“Haa.....I'm sorry, but can you ask someone else? How about asking your friends instead?”

After Shidou says that, Nia's facial expression becomes cloudy instantly.

But she returns to her usual tone right away and she swings her head.

"No...haha. That's because I have no friends anyway~"

After saying those words, Nia narrowed her eyelids.

"—But are you really okay like that?"

"Eh?"

For some reason, there's some hidden meaning behind those words, Shidou knits his eyebrows. Then, Nia lifts the tip of her lips and continues speaking.

"—Isn't it your job to make the Spirits fall for you boy? No.....Itsuka Shidou-kun?"

"Huh.....?"

For a moment, he couldn't understand what she said, and then Shido let out a ridiculous voice.

## Translation and References Notes (Chapter 1)

1. Manga aimed at a young male audience. The age group varies with individual readers and different magazines, but it is primarily intended for boys between the ages of 8 to 18. For copyright reasons Blast is used here instead of Jump.
2. Boke and tsukkomi are loosely equivalent to the roles of "funny man" or "comic" (boke) and "straight man" (tsukkomi) in the comedy duos of western culture.
3. 3.A Japanese rice soup dish made from pre-cooked rice and water
4. 4. Beta-nuri is a process in manga-making that involves filling in blank spaces with black ink.Gomu-kake is erasing the pencil marks from the rough sketch.
5. A district in the Chiyoda ward of Tokyo, Japan. The go to place in Japan for anime and manga content.

## Chapter 02: Akiba, I Have Returned!

### Part 1

“Kata-Kata\* that small sound came from the ringing of their teeth. There’s no time anymore.

But the atmosphere in this place isn’t low at all. Certainly the place outside was being wrapped up by the cold weather of December, but the temperature here is pretty warm because the office is covered with thick glasses and completed with air conditioner. It keeps a comfortable temperature for everyone here.

Even so, Knox cannot stop his body from trembling. His hands and legs, which have been covered by bandages and plaster, are also trembling. Gradually, he takes a deep breath.

Though, it’s not like Knox doesn’t know what is happening here. Next to him is his subordinate Burton, who is also wrapped up by bandages and his face expression looks just as nervous as Knox’s face. The reason was simple.

“.....Uhm.”

Right in front of them, there’s a man sitting down on his chair; he lowered down his eyesight to the document on his hands.

“.....!”

“-----!”

With only such a little movement from that man, sweat begins pouring from Knox and Burton’s heads.

The man is being assisted by an ash blonde haired woman whose appearance could attract every man. Her facial expression is as sharp as a sword which would cut them down, making those two fall into silence with their faces getting paler.

That man’s appearance looks young. It seems like he’s in the middle of thirties. But why does this young appearance suit with him despite his age? He doesn’t looks like a middle age man at all. Actually, this year Knox is forty-eight years old, so you can say that this man’s age is younger than him.

Of course that’s only natural. The person over there isn’t an ordinary man.

He’s a man whose name is famous in the world as a world genius financial monster from DEM Industry, its first generation founder: Sir Isaac Westcott.

In normal situation, it would be impossible for a mere pilot like Knox and Burton to be able to meet up with him in person. For the two of them to be here right now, of course there’s a certain reason for that.

“.....Knox-san. What in the world will happen to us.....”

Right now, Burton is talking with a small voice that almost cannot be heard at all. Knox turns and glances to him. He replies back with a voice that can't be heard by Westcott.

".....Ssh! Shut up!"

"....."

After hearing Knox's words, Burton stopped speaking.

Burton's insecurities are understandable. However, having a small talk in their situation shouldn't be done. If they did, then the possibility of the situation becoming worse is pretty high. The only thing the two of them can do is to keep silent just like a stone and wait for what will happen next.

Right. Knox and Burton are being called here for some reasons. Anyway, that's not because the two of them will be given any work to do like usual. Instead, it must be because of the fatal mistake they had committed.

A few days ago, both Knox and Burton were sending <Material A>, which is a spirit captured by DEM Industries, from Neryl Island's experiment facility in Pacific Ocean. During the middle of transport, they got attacked out of nowhere and that resulted in <Material A> escaping.

Though, it's not like Knox and the others let the <Material A> escape on purpose. It's was merely an accident or irregular event.

But knowing how much Westcott is attached to the Spirits, no matter what the cause of this trouble is, dealing with this man means this has something to do with their punishment.

Westcott is without doubt, a man who could change the world's economy by only using his fingertips. Knox and Burton could be thrown away to the street if this man really wished to, that is something really easy for that man.

No, Knox throws away that thought inside his mind. He assumes something even worst is more possible, because the assumption he made earlier looks too gentle to be done by that man.

"....."

Knox took a silent glance to Westcott's side.

There's stood a young, blonde woman behind him; he takes a note of her.

Just by looking at her for once, it can be felt that she's different from an ordinary secretary. That woman is DEM wizard's supervisor, Ellen Mira Mathers.

She has power equal or even stronger than the spirits; the strongest human ever. If she's with Westcott since the beginning, that's means she's going to cut off Knox and Burton's neck as punishment.

\*Kachi-Kachi\*, the sound of the clock attached on the wall resonates inside the entire office.

Because of the silence, Knox can hear the footstep sounds from the stairs above the office clearly.

“-----I see.”

Westcott comments upon looking at the report document. A dark gaze is pointed to Knox and Burton's faces.

“.....U-Ukh.”

He puts some strength inside his gaze; it feels like the gaze has pierced through their bodies. Knox, who cannot describe this unpleasant feeling, unintentionally frowns at this.

However Westcott doesn't seem to care about that at all, he throws the report onto the desk. Then, he stands up and walks towards the two of them.

After that, in front of the two of them, Westcott moves his lips and speaks in calm tone.

He is going to announce whether it's punishment or dismissal. Or, if the management thinks that they're not useful anymore, it will be an order for Ellen to get rid of them.

Knox averts his gaze away from Westcott and his words keep echoing inside his mind, then he bites his inner teeth and closes his eyes.

“Thank you for your trouble. The two of you should use Realizer to treat your injuries, they'll recover in instant. Give your body enough rest before coming back to work.”

Knox's body shivered upon hearing Westcott's words, it was truly unexpected thing.

“.....What?”

“Only that .....Sir?”

Knox and Burton exchanged their glances for a moment, and then a voice came out to interrupt them.

It was Westcott himself who says it. It seems he still does not understand their reaction.

After that, he nods as if understanding something.

“Aah, so that was the problem? Of course, the treatment will be under worker's insurance, so you'll both receive-“

“No, that's not what I meant.....!”

Knox cannot keep his silence upon hearing Westcott's words. The reaction Westcott gave also looks unexpected, but Knox unintentionally continues speaking.

“Because we let the <Material A> escape. About the punishment.....”

“Huh? That wasn't your fault judging from the report. Instead, I have high evaluation toward your calm judgment had during <Nightmare>'s attack. Do you think I'll be a fool that would choose my personal emotions instead and lose such talented staff like you two?”

“I-Is that so.....”



The unbelievable sentence he just heard made Knox start to sweat. Then, Westcott says "Besides", adding another sentence as he continued to speak.

"I already planned to free <Material A> anyway. Besides, it's better to let her be free for now. Thanks to you, I don't have to setup the stage."

"Wha-?"

Knox widened his eyes when he heard Westcott's unexpected words.

-----This man, he planned to release the Spirit <Material A>.....Then what was his true intention for delivering the Spirit to Japan?

"Director, what are you going to--"

However, before he could finish his sentence, he can feel that someone is pulling on his clothes.

When he turns to see, it was Burton who face is pale. \*Bang-Bang\* a sound is made as he swung his head from left to right.

Looking at Burton face, Knox realized that he's going to ask something unnecessary for him to know. Then, Knox fixes his posture in confusion.

"I understand. Well then, please excuse us....."

"Aah."

Westcott raise one of his hands and replied with a friendly tone. Knox and Burton left the room together.

When they leave the room and pass the door, they expected Westcott to call out to them to come back but.....Nothing happened.

They walk along the corridor, once they reach some distance where their voice cannot reach the inner part of that room, Knox as well as Burton let out their breath \*Buhaa\*. Frankly speaking, up until now both of them felt as if they were breathing in underwater.

"Just now.....What does that mean?"

Burton asking while wiping sweats on his forehead using his cloth's sleeve, Knox also does the same thing as he replies to him.

".....I don't know. Perhaps, the way we think is far too different with him. That's impossible for us to understand him. No, rather..."

"Rather, what?"

".....No, nothing."

While Burton pauses, Knox gives a vague reply.

They are still inside the DEM Industry Company building. In this place, they won't know whether someone will eavesdrop on their conversation. Somewhere or not, right now

something like that is floating inside his mind, so as expect that he shouldn't continue his words.

-----Apparently, "that" isn't a human being like him, that's what he thought.

No, to be exact-----That man for sure, doesn't consider himself to be the same living being as Knox and Burton.

He remembered Westcott's eyes when he looked at them. He looked at them differently as if they were the eyes of some kind of reptile or insect. Knox shuddered involuntarily

".....Let's go, Burton."

"Ah.....Alright."

Knox and Burton continued walking along the corridor.

Secretly inside his mind, he thinks of finding a new candidate to replace him in the workplace.

## **Part 02**

"Just now, what the--"

Shidou creates a dubious face and stares at the girl in front of him.

Honjou Nia. A girl who had proclaimed herself to be the manga artist, Honjou Souji.

Shidou unintentionally answers back her question with another question. However, Shidou cannot abandon this girl's word after he had heard it. The reason was simply, for her to know this matter has surprised Shidou a lot.

Right, this girl just now said-----<Spirit>.

That is, this world's source of calamity, the existence that is the true cause of the spacequake occurrence.

But that existence was kept secret, only some people were allowed to know about their existence. Usually, they are government officials or the upper class department of military enterprises.

Moreover, it's not only that.

Not only has this girl known about Spirits' existence, she also knows Shidou's name and his objective to settle the problem through a peaceful way.

"Nia.....How do you know about that?"

Shidou questions her with a wary face.

"Fufuf?"

After that, Nia remove the glasses she wore for work and then listlessly brush her hair up.

“Well, I wonder why, how mysterious?”

“D-Don’t dodge my question! You, who are you!?”

As Shidou asked with a strong tone, Nia answered to him casually while waving her hands.

“No need to be so angry. Because~ I will tell you properly.”

After answering him with a light tone, she calls out a name.

“-----<Heavenly Raiment – Yod>”

“Wha.....!?”

Shidou held his breath.

At the moment Nia calls out its name, a light began to surround her body, and then Nia’s body is wrapped up by the light.

“This is.....”

Shidou suddenly let out a voice while narrowing his eyes.

There’s no doubt. There’s no mistake. This is-----

“Astral Dress!?”

The light has manifested as an Astral Dress. An absolute armor that a spirit always wears, that’s it. The thick Reiryoku has formed into glowing clothes.

Soon the light has already wrapped around her body. The maid clothes Nia previously wears now has already completely changed its shape.

The transparent light gave radiance like an illusion. It is an astral dress that looks just like a priest’s robe. The cross design gives it an important point, and her head is covered with a veil. Somehow, her appearance looks just like a nun.

“Just by this you already understand, right?”

Nia opens her shoulders and gives a fearless smile.

Shidou’s looked at Nia’s appearance from the top of her head. He lets out a trembling voice.

“Nia, are you.....a Spirit?”

“Yes~ Well, if there’s a living being that could do this kind of thing, as far as I know there’s none other than that one.”

After saying that jokingly, Nia laughed.

However, looking at Shidou's reaction, she saw that Shido is still shuddered at what happened. It made Nia dissatisfied and he puts her hands on her hip and her mouth creates a “^” shape.

“What's this~ There's no reaction at all? Even after I transform myself like this, it's only makes me look like a dumb.”

“.....Eh?”

Shidou scratches his cheeks at Nia's constant casual tone. It sounds the same as it did previously. He can felt that the high tension that had filled the room is starting to vanish.

“I was though you would go [W-What the heck!?,] or something like that. Or perhaps you would change your pattern into \*Doki!\* upon seeing the figure of a girl who suddenly transform herself like this! And anyway, don't you think my Astral Dress is quite erotic? Just look at the slit over here near the joint of my legs. The whole dress is created by semi-transparent mysterious material which completely displays my body line.”

While saying these words, Nia makes a pose by lifting her left leg onto a nearby chair. From the side, Shidou can see Nia's thigh clearly through the cut of the slit. Shidou's face also went red and he averted his gaze away from her.

“.....Tch!”

“Ah~ That one, that one! That reaction~ Ehehe.It's fine, it's fine~ boy. Perhaps you have leg fetish? I see~ You're still young, so it's alright for being a bit greedy~”

Nia swings her hand as if trying to lure Shidou. Even though her outfit looks like a virtuous nun, her personality is completely different from her looks.

“.....Aah, it's enough!”

Shidou scratches his head out of irritation, and then he turns back towards Nia again.

“Stop making fun of me! I'm still confused with current situation. Nia, I already understand that you are a spirit. But how do you know about me? That I — um, persuade the Spirits.”

“Aah, that one?”

After Shidou asked, Nia moves down her leg from the chair, slowly she raises one of her hand in front of her body.

“Even though I don't really like giving any spoiler due to my profession, but I'll make an expectation for this time.”

After that, along with her movements, she moves her lips-----Suddenly, she called out for its name.

“<Tome of Revelation– Rasiel>”

The moment she calls the name, something appeared in Nia's hand, it was a book.

It was a large book which looks like a scripture. Its cover is made from mysterious material which is neither leather nor metal. Just like Nia's astral dress, the book has a cross design applied on it.

"That's.....an angel?"

"Right. My angel <Rasiel>, the omniscient angel that knows everything in this world."



“Wha.....”

Hearing Nia’s words, Shidou knits his eyebrows.

“Omniscient.....? What does that mean?”

“Well, even if you ask me. It’s just like reading a book. <Rasiel> can tell me all things in this world. It knows what occurs in this world. It also knows who and what they’re doing. For example-----Right, at that time when you finished your shopping, I knew that you would pass through that street.”

“What?--“

Shidou inclined his head upon hearing Nia’s words.

Nia found his reaction pretty amusing, so she chuckles and laughs.

“----Don’t tell me, you’re really thinking that our meeting was just a real coincidence? You meet with a girl who collapsed on the street by chance and then you look after her, and also by any chance too that girl is actually a Spirit. Do you really think something like that is possible? No-no, generally thinking something like that is impossible, right? If it were me, I won’t create that kind of prologue for a story.”

“.....In other words, you knew that I would help you, so you collapse there on purpose?”

“Well, sort of.”

Nia answers while nodding exaggeratedly. Shidou becomes nervous after hearing her words.

“.....Then, did you also let me help out with the manuscript for some reason--”

“Ah, that one I was really asking for your help.”

“So, there isn’t any reason!?”

Shidou yelled at her. ....No, if there were any hidden meaning behind that act, then it would definitely something terrible. Somehow he feels as if he’s falling down from a plane or such.

However, that’s means in fact, since the beginning Nia invited Shidou to her room because she already knew about him. Shidou shakes his head in order to calm down his mind before turning to Nia again.

“Because of that-----Nia. What is your real objective? Why.....I’m in this place?”

Being asked, Nia’s face looks so calm as opposed to Shidou’s. Then, she replies with a light tone while shrugging her shoulders.

“No need to be so wary. It’s not like I have any particular business with you. But if you really wanted to know why, boy, I only wanted to see you myself with my eyes. Some information I know about you I get them from <Rasiel>. However, it still cannot match with meeting you in person.”

Nia touches the front cover of <Rasiel> with her fingertip and then it's floating on the air, she then continues her sentence.

"And then-----That's right, I wanted to say thanks to you."

"Thanks.....?"

Shidou shrugs his shoulders in wonder. It might be true that Shidou already help Nia out, but that was all according to Nia's plan. It made her story somehow feel strange.

Noticing Shidou's thought, Nia shakes g her head to brush off his thought.

"Aah, that's not it. Not that one. That's because you saved me in the beginning of this month."

"Eh?"

Shidou paused for a while.

There's no doubt. This is the first time that Shidou has meet with Nia. Besides, on the beginning of this month, Shidou had lost control of his Reiryoku because the path became narrow. Rather, it was the time when he was saved by everyone.

"Heee, you don't remember? Listen, you answered my call back then, and you shot the airplane down for me, didn't you? It was thanks to you that I was able to escape."

"Your call.....That's, ah--"

After saying that, Shidou's shoulders begin shaking.

It's true that at that time his consciousness was blurred and he cannot remember clearly what happened. However, he can remember that somebody was calling out to him back then. That's why he released his Reiryoku.

"That's means that was your call.....? But the transportation....."

"I was locked inside the transportation plane, DEM Industry's transportation plane."

".....! DEM!?"

Upon hears that unexpected name, Shidou's facial expression sharpened. Deus Ex Machina Industry. The headquarters are built in England. Unlike Kotori and the others from <Ratatoskr>, this organization's main goal is to capture Spirits. Actually, Shidou and the others had already faced them several times already.

"Why was Nia inside DEM's transportation.....?"

Seeing Shidou asking her with serious looks in his face, Nia answers back with a flat tone.

"Ng----? That's because, I was capture by those guys of course. No---, I was lock inside the basement for a long time. Thanks to that my body is all stiffen. And what's make it so awful is that I had to put my serialization on hiatus for a long time."

While saying these words, she put her hand into her cap to scratch her head.

Hearing her casual tone, Shidou almost ignored what she just said. However, Shidou begins to understand her sentence right away and widens his eyes in surprised.

“Captured? By DEM.....!?”

“Yes. That’s right~ I think it was 5 years ago? Well, who’s that again, that sickly girl.”

Next, Nia points her left hand’s fingertip to touch the front cover of <Rasiel> gently.

After that, <Rasiel> shook a little to show that it was reacting back. The page glows a faint light and automatically flipped its own pages.

Nia takes a look at the page, then \*Pon!\* she claps her hands.

“-----Aah, that’s right. It’s Ellen. Ellen Mira Mathers. I can’t do anything to against her. I was seriously beaten up by her. She was waiting to ambush me and suddenly she went \*Don!\* and attacked me.”

“Ellen.”

Hearing the name, Shidou’s face getting stiffens and his eyes sharpen.

Ellen Mira Mathers, the top executive of DEM Industry and the strongest wizard of humanity. She and her companions are destined to be Shidou and <Ratatoskr>’s enemy. Certainly, just using her power will be enough to capture a Spirit.

“A-Are you really.....alright?”

“Ng--, actually I can’t remember very well. They tied me down to various machines and such. –Ah, no, let me correct it. There’s one thing really harsh they did to me. Back then, those guys didn’t allow me to draw any manga at all. Come on.....If I’m not grasping a pen in a long time like that, then my drawing sense would become dull. How could they compensate if the manga sales fell down?”

Nia folded her arms in an irritated tone as she said that. Shidou knits his eyebrows at the moment. Even though that this person was involved in a serious problem.....for a peerless, heartless company like DEM to treated her like that can be considered as pretty gentle. Besides, there’s only one thing still stuck inside his mind. Shidou turns back to Nia and ask,

“In short, Nia. Your angel could know everything, right? Then why you didn’t know about the ambush.....”

After Shidou asked, Nia points her fingertip and swings it to deny his question.

“Ah, no~. That’s not how it works.”

“What do you mean by not.....?”

“Even though my <Rasiel> is certainly an omniscient angel; in the very end, I could only get information I wish to know. It’s not like I’m capable of knowing everything that will happen in the future, nor could it warn me whenever danger is around. In short, I can’t avoid something that I don’t know. It’s quite similar to a super-powerful search engine.”



"I think.....I can see it now."

Shidou gulps down his saliva, seemingly believing in what Nia just explained to him.

"Even though I think it has amazing ability..... It also has its own limit, huh."

Then Nia went "Fuun?" and narrows her eyes.

"Didn't I already say it, boy? Right now, you don't know that my <Rasiel> has another ability."

"Eh.....?"

"Everything you write on <Rasiel> will become a truth. On the other side, that's means-"

Nia creates a fearless smile, slowly she raise her left hand overhead. After that, she uses her finger to take the ornament that was attached on the veil on her head. Then, the edge of decoration that was hidden finally can be seen, the full shape of the decoration looks similar to a pen.

Then Nia sets up the pen and starts drawing something on the page of <Rasiel>, which is still floating in the air.

"....."

"....."

"....."

".....That's.... what are you doing?"

A few minutes later, Nia who still had not finished her work, let out a voice.

"Wait. Please wait a minute."

Nia answers with a serious look, and then continues drawing something on the page again.

And few minutes later after that,

"-----Okay. I think this is enough."

Nia shows such a determined face. She returns the pen to its original place, Nia taps her fingertips \*Ton\* on <Rasiel>. Not so long after Nia does that, <Rasiel> starts to glow a faint light.

"W-What the-?"

"You'll soon understand. Look, it will begin soon."

"Eh? E, Uwaah!?"

Shidou screamed at that instant.

But that was only natural. Anyway, his body is moving against his will.

“W-What is this!?”

Aah~, right-right. Over here-over here.”

Saying those words, then she lays down on the bed. After that, Shidou mounts on her back and begin massaging Nia’s waist skillfully using both hands.

“Aah~.....Over there...Over there. This feels good~”

“Wa-Wait a minute! What is this.....!?”

While Shidou is trying to protest, Shidou’s hands suddenly move on its own and start rubbing Nia’s butt.

“Kyaa! Boy, you’re so perverted!”

“N-No, just now that wasn’t me-!?”

Shidou screams in a high pitch. Then, Shidou regains the ability to move his body accordingly again. He jumps back from that spot, “Haa-haa” He lets out a sigh while shaking his shoulders.

Upon seeing his reaction, Nia raises her bodies up and then starts laughing.

“Well, in short, this is it.”

And then she taps <Rasiel> front cover lightly, intending to show the page to Shidou.

In the page, there’s an illustration which style is similar to a manga that Nia drew moments ago. Furthermore, there’s a character resembling Shidou and Nia drawn, ---- Not only that, there’s also drawn a detail that’s even similar to what just occurred moments ago.

“T-This is.....”

“Future describing. I already said it, right? Everything written on <Rasiel> is a truth. ---- Right. For example, something newly written on it is as well.”

“.....!? W-What did you say.....!?”

Shidou lets out a surprised voice. Of course he would. If something like that really exists, that’s means Nia can create the future according to her will. That’s even isn’t something on a terrible level anymore, but on the level of a God instead.

However, something popped up inside Shidou’s mind.

“.....Then why is it a manga? Wouldn’t it faster if you just write it down?”

“Ng~, because if I do that, I can’t grasp the feeling very well. But, if I have time to create few second events just by drawing on this book, I’d rather use that free time for work instead. It’s not that convenient you see?”

“.....Err.”

Shidou doesn't seem to believe her. Nowadays, to think that she has the power which level reaches the point where she could control the world.....Why is such an issue just passing by Nia's filter? Seemingly, she doesn't think this serious matter that far yet.

Judging from Shidou's thoughts, Nia creates a face showing dissatisfaction.

"Ah. You created a face as if you're looking down at me again. If boy still does that then, I wonder if I should show you this too~ About how scary it would be to know everything already happened in the past."

"Eh.....?"

Hearing Nia's words, Shidou knits his eyebrows. After that, Nia did something similar that she had already previously done. She taps the front cover of <Rasiel> and the page starts flipping again.

Then, she looks at the page and puts her hand on her chin.

"Fufufu.....I see. Instant Lightning Blast?Hee, isn't that cool?"

"Bhu.....!?"

Unexpected words came out from Nia's mouth, Shidou coughed as a result. Come to think of it, that was an original final move created by Shidou back then.

Nia, continues reading the page while giggling.

"Ah, I found your original character. The Black-Clothed Fighter Lieven, eh? Ah, I agree. Black is cool don't you think. Ah, but if you're going to create a story with him as a main character, I'd suggest to give him some weak point that the reader could sympathize with and to add tension to the story. Also I think it may be because of your age that you may feel ashamed about writing a female character. But you should give more thought into main girl's settings, since her character will directly be associated with the sales."

"Please don't give me opinion from a pro view poiiiiiiiiint!?"

Shidou scratches his head and bends his body while bursting in tears. To think that he would experience another person learning about the original character that he created. He feels a pain similar to being stabbed by an unseen knife.

Shidou stays in that spot for short while, \*Haa-haa\* he breathes heavily while trying to stand up.

Then, Nia made a triumph smile.

"How was it? About the terrible power of <Rasiel> did you learn your lesson already?"

".....Yes. It's really great. I am terribly sorry for underestimating it."

Shidou bows his head while apologizing, as Nia looks satisfied.

"Good. -----Well, like I said earlier. It was thanks to you that I could escape and resume the serialization again. I'm truly grateful for that."

Nia looks directly at Shidou's eyes and continues.

“-----But, well, I think you and the others wouldn't be satisfied with only this and then saying good bye. <Ratatoskr>.....Right? You save the Spirits by making them dere. It's quite interesting, don't you think so? Doesn't that mean you should persuade me too?”

“That's.....”

Perhaps, that's right. Even though Nia looks like a spirit who has already adapted to society, they still wouldn't know when she will create a space quake. Frankly speaking, Shidou also wanted Nia to get protection under <Ratatoskr>.

Besides, she had been captured by DEM once, and there's still one more problem left. Above else, there's no guarantee that she won't get capture by DEM again. It's too dangerous to leave this girl alone.

Understanding what Shidou is currently thinking from his looks, Nia nodded exaggeratedly.

“As expected, as expected. Like I said it's quite amusing. A secret organization feels super interesting. -----Moreover, I already said it, that I wanted to say thanks to you, didn't I? That's why; I will give you one chance as my gratitude.”

“Chance-----you say, ah.....”

Shidou opens his eyes wide. Then he remembers what Nia said earlier.

Right. Nia said it herself. Because now the manuscript is already finished, she will have a day off.

“But, the place should be Akiba. I won't change my decision on this one, okay? Since I'm already lock up for five years, my body is already longing for 2D. My withdrawal symptoms are really bad. I'm shivering from wanting to read serialization of this and that manga, as well as new work from this and that author.”

Nia embraces her own shoulders while saying that, then \*Kata-Kata\* she shakes her body on purpose.

“After I finish, I'll have to work on the next series, since I'll be busy at Comico in the end of year, I had to put some spare times for you, so you have my regards. Because I'm pretty popular, you know?”

Nia raises her fingertips. Sweat comes pouring from Shidou's cheek.

“Co-Comico?”

“Comic Colosseum. It's the so-called doujin event where they display and sale doujinshi. No-, I thought that I couldn't participate since I didn't rent a space this year, but there's someone who already rented a booth but cannot come due to sudden illness, and that person rented the space to me. I still have the manuscript I drew before I got captured by DEM. Well~, I also haven't participate in Comico for a long time~”<sup>1</sup>

Nia folds her arms, as she nods to herself while thinking about that. Then, she notices that Shidou was being left behind in the conversation.

“Aah, sorry-sorry. Well in other words, it’s something like that.”

Nia points to herself with her thumb on the chest.

“-----I’ll give you a chance. If you can make me get dere at you, then do it.”

Along with that action, Nia lifts up the tips of her lips. Upon hearing her self-confident words, Shidou gulps down his saliva.

“.....!”

“Of course, I won’t peek at your strategy session, so don’t worry. I dislike creating spoilers for someone, and I faaaaaaaaar more dislike getting spoilers from someone. That’s why please set up a strategy with.....Err.”

The pages of <Rasiel> flip as they follow Nia’s eye movement.

“Aah, yes-yes. Kotori-chan, being a commander at age 14 is really impressive. Please feel free to set up a proper plan with your little sister. But anyway, even if I was the one who invite you, it’s really difficult to make me fall for you. Please come with your best preparation~”

Then, Nia gave a \*Ahaha\* laugh while waving her hand.

“-----Well, let’s end the conversation for today. I also should finish the manuscript, and doesn’t boy also have to cook dinner for everyone?”

“Ah----Nia.”

“Well-well. Let’s continue the talk in the promised day. I’ll tell you the place and the time later. ----Ah. Is it alright if I search your mail address by myself?”

“A-Aah.....That’s alright.”

“I see. Thank you~. Well, see you later~. I’m looking forward to it~”

Before Shidou could let out his opinion in the conversation, Nia already ended the conversation and pushed Shidou out from her room.

### **Part 3**

“-----The Spirit that had been captured by DEM?”

After return back to home, Shidou made a contact to the underground facility. He tells them of the unbelievable event that had occurred previously, Kotori immediately returns back to the Itsuka residence.

After hearing the entire situation from Shidou, Kotori holds the chupa-chupa cups stick while knitting her eyebrows.

“Moreover, she has been working as Manga artist a few years before in this world.....? This is such an unexpected truth.-----Well, this is similar to Miku’s case. We can’t say that it’s impossible for this to have happened.....”

Kotori places her hand on her chin. Izayoi Miku is the same as Tohka and the others, but before Shidou sealed away her Reiryoku as a spirit, Shidou and the others knew her existence as a super popular idol in the currently blooming times.

That’s why, compared to that, the circumstances right now share some similarities.

Then, when Shidou and Kotori are deep in conversation, a voice can be heard from behind.

“.....Mu? Shido, what are you talking about with Kotori?”

Standing there is a girl with long night-colored hair with pair of crystal-colored eyes. ----  
--Yatogami Tohka. A Spirit who’s Reiryoku had also been sealed by Shidou, now she has become his neighbor and classmate.

“Aah, Tohka. Ng..... We’re talking about work for a bit.”

“Ooh, I see. Sorry for disturbing you.”

Tohka apologizes and bows her head. After that, another voice could be heard from the people who are currently in Living Room.

“-----Shidou. I’m seeking an offering. Quickly show your dedication by offering a good feast to me.”

“Translation. Kaguya says she’s hungry, I want to eat Shidou’s delicious food Nyaa~. That’s what she said.”

“Can you not put in a strange suffix!?”

The Two girls were leaning on the sofa, mutually exchanged such words.

It was just like looking into the reflection of the mirror, those girl’s faces as alike as two melons. One girl is dressed in black shirt with a red English letter on it, while the other one is dressed in pastel colored cardigan. They are twin Spirits similar to Tohka who live in the mansion next to Itsuka residence: Yamai Kaguya and Yamai Yuzuru.

“Aah, sorry-sorry. I’ll prepare the dinner soon, wait a minute.”

Shidou replies with a wry smile, he opens the fish grill which is today’s main dish, he decided to cook Saba Shioyaki.<sup>2</sup>

That’s right. Right now, Shidou is currently preparing dinner for the spirits while discussing something with Kotori. He continues the conversation while he is holding the chopsticks. Shidou wears the apron and holds chopstick with one hand, and uses the other hand to hold the ladle. Just by looking at it, no one would ever think that they’re discussing an important matter that would affect the world’s fate.

“Nm, this smells good. Oi~, have you already prepared the table?”

“Yes~!”

After Shidou raises his voice, Kaguya, Yuzuru, Tohka, and the other two girls who were talking with Tohka in the Living Room answered him.

Yoshino is the girl who has a rabbit puppet equipped on her left hand and has a gentle personality. Natsumi is the other one is a girl who bends her back while looking with displeasure. These two are the same as everyone else. They're spirits who had their Reiryoku being sealed by Shidou.

The spirits follow Shidou's instruction, and they begin to tidying up the table. Then, they return all magazines and newspaper to its original place. They also wiped the table, and lined up every dish nicely on the table as each food starts to arrive.

".....Nevertheless."

Then, while watching the scene, Kotori lets out a heavy breath.

"The omniscience angel <Rasiel>.....Huh. Not only is she capable of gather any information she wanted to know, but she's also capable of drawing the future to follow her will. A terrible angel has appeared."

Hearing Kotori's words, Shidou nodded deeply.

"Come to think of it.....Even Kotori too, has an embarrassing past."

"Huh? Wha-What are you talking about!?"

Shidou averting his gaze away while saying that. Kotori knits her eyebrows while her cheeks turn red.

"For example, when we slept together back then, I said that I was the one who wet the bed because you cried so much. But thinking back now by looking at their face back then, I think both Father and Mother knew what actually happened....."

"Kyaa-----!Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

While Shidou was speaking and folding his arms, Kotori screams made Shidou's mouth stop.

Yamai sisters, who are getting interested by the scream, turn their faces to Shidou and Kotori at the same time.

"Ng? The two of you, what are you talking about? The topic seems pretty interesting?"

"Consent. I thought I heard something about wetting something just now-"

"W-Wetting the table! That's it, look! After finish tidying up the table, let's arrange the foods, Kaguya take care of the fish, Yuzuru take care of the stew, alright?"

Hearing Kotori answer in a strong tone, made Kaguya continue her work as she hands over a ladle to Yuzuru.

"I-Is that so?"

"Acknowledgement. I understand....."

Judging from the current atmosphere, the two of them follow Kotori instruction obediently. They begin to arrange the foods.

“.....”

After the two of them continue their work, Kotori turn her face to Shidou once again. Looking at that terrifying facial expression, Shidou went \*Hiiii\* then held his breath.

“.....Starting from now, if you dare to say that in public.....You know what will happen, right?”

Talking with chill voice, Kotori said that. Thinking about it carefully, Kotori is just like Nia. She knows a lot about Shidou's past. If he tries to disobey her, he won't know what will happen to him.

“U-Understood.....”

Shidou raises his both hands as if trying to say that he's giving up, Kotori then made a \*Pun\* sound as she lets out a breath as she is sitting on the back on the chair.

“.....That's not what I meant. If that kind of angel really exists, then every kind of security will become useless. Moreover, doesn't that mean she can leak out a country's military affairs and top secrets? Depending on how you use it, it could easily trigger a war. To think that this kind of thing was in DEM's hand until recently-----I think it's very dreadful.”

“P-Perhaps.....I think so too.”

Agreeing, Shidou started to sweat.

But according his impression to her, there's no way that Nia will use her angel for that kind of thing.....If that power were to fall in the hands of someone with ill attention, the world will receive another damage beyond what is caused by a space quake.

Kotori takes the chupa-cups in her hand, and swings it just like a conductor's stick, and she continued.

“And it's not only that.”

“Ng? What's it?”

“If that kind of angel really exists, perhaps we will also be able to know something about <Phantom>.”

Kotori said that while holding chupa-chups stick.

“! You're right.....”

Shidou widens his eyes in surprised and let out a voice.

The one who had turned Kotori into spirit, an unidentified Spirit: <Phantom>.

Certainly if it was <Rasiel>, they might be able to figure out something about that unidentified Spirit.



“Besides.....”

“Besides?”

Shidou asked in return, Kotori averted her gaze a little before continuing.

“.....Maybe, we can find about Shidou and Mana’s forgotten past memories.”

“Ah-----”

Hearing Kotori’s words, Shidou widens his eyes again.

That’s right. Shidou and Mana are blood related sibling.....That is something they already know. However, they have no recollection of the memories during the time they were together at all.

Kotori for some reason is making a complex facial expression. She rests her elbow onto the table.

"...Well, but that's only a big if. We are not sealing Spirits in order to abuse their power. The primary objective is to put Nia under our protection. — Of course, I'll support you as usual, but give it your all, Shidou."

“A-Aah.....I understand.”

It’s just like what Kotori said. Whether it’s about <Phantom>, or about his personal motives, he should make that as his secondary motive. If he keeps thinking that way, Nia will surely be able to sense that an ulterior motive.

Shidou swings his head to brush away that kind of thought, and then he grips his fist.

Two days afterward. Shidou is standing near the electric town ticket gate in Akihabara, waiting for Nia.

During weekdays, the station is filled with crowds of people. In recent years, since the station has gained fame as a sightseeing-area, there are a lot of foreigners that can be seen around.

Shidou pays attention to the ticket gate in order to foresee Nia’s arrival. The appearance of the surroundings is somehow pretty different.

Even until now, he’s already visit this station so many times, no doubt this is an eccentric station. Over there, there’s countless number of advertisements related to Anime and Game stuff. He feels like he’s coming into a completely strange world. Today, he feels like he’s going for a trip. However in this street, people gather only for one reason.

“-----A-Ah, can you hear me Shidou?”

Then, Kotori’s voice can be heard coming from intercom attached on his right ear. The surrounding of the ticket gate area is really noisy, but thanks to the great technology developed by <Ratatoskr>, the voice is ringing inside Shidou’s eardrum clearly.

“Aah, I can hear it.”

"It's almost the promised time----- This time we cannot use <Fraxinus>, so we cannot use the transmission to transfer you from the town at all. Even though, hearing from your story she's likely not a spirit type who like fighting----- But you still have to be careful, Shidou."

"I understand. She also said that she has not much time. Somehow, I have to raise her affection level within today."

After Shidou said that, a voice can be heard coming again from the intercom. Minowa's voice is ringing from the same place as Kotori the temporary control room in the basement.

"Commander, Shidou-kun, she's coming! Our target.....Nia!"

".....! So she's coming."

"Well then, let's go, Shidou. -----Let's start our Date <War>."

"Aah-----!"

After Shidou gave his consent, he pokes the intercom using his finger to confirm. Then, he went to search for Nia at the ticket gate.

After that, crowds of people are coming from the opposite direction of the ticket gate. Each person is lining up from the train at the same time as they pass through the ticket gate.

"That's, Nia is.....Err."

Then, Shidou is looking at each person who passing the ticket gate from edge to edge. Inside the crowd, he finds a girl that looks familiar to him. The spirit whom he has appointment with today: Nia.

Even though he can recognize her.....The girl's style is somehow different today. Right now, Nia who had collapsed few days ago hasn't dressed up in Nun-style Astral Dress or denim room wear like before. Instead, she wears a down jacket and a scarf which covers her mouth. Whenever Nia takes a breath, the glasses she wears become slightly foggy.

In addition, she is pulling some kind of property with her. Nia is carrying a big rucksack on her back, even though it looks like empty and flat. And then in her left hand, she is rolling a suitcase as if she's going to go on vacation abroad. No, it's not only that. Taking a look carefully, there's also some small size carry cart tied up onto the suitcase by using several belts made from rubber.

".....Uwah."

Shidou made a wry smile upon seeing Nia's appearance, which abandons cuteness and attractiveness in order to bring her luggage.

After that, Nia notices Shidou appearance. Waving her hand to him, a \*gara-gara\* sound can be heard as she rolls along the suitcase with her while walking to Shidou.

"Hello-hello, boy. Good morning. This is such a nice morning"

“.....Ah, yes. Nia is, how should I say.....Fully equipped, aren't you?”

After Shidou said that, Nia widens her eyes in surprised. Then, she made an “Ehehe” sound as she shakes her shoulders and started laughing.

“No-no, what are you talking about? We haven't even begun buying items yet, right?”

“O-Ooh, you're right.”

Shidou replies with a vague answer, and then Kotori's voice is heard ringing from the intercom on his right ear.

“-----Shidou, the choices have already appeared.”

Inside the temporary control room in the underground facility, the crew of the airship <Fraxinus> had already gathered.

The commander, Itsuka Kotori is sitting on the center seat, while the vice commander, KannazukiKyouhei is right behind her. And each of the six members of organization sits in front of the computer, gazing at the monitor intensely.

On the large monitor installed in the wall of the room, Nia's figure who dress up with no sex appeal at all being displayed on it. Some choices then appeared on the screen before them.

1. [Your clothes look very cute. It looks good on you.]
2. [What kind of clothes are you wearing? Let me choose a new one for you.]
3. [Hee~ you sure are wear are something that is worth trying to take it off?]

Even though the original equipment isn't present here, the choices appearing in the commanding room right now are connected to the AL from <Fraxinus>, which is still under repair. Then, they begin to select the choices on the system.

“Everyone, select your choice!”

Following Kotori's command, all crew members begin operating the console on their hands.

Soon, the result is displayed on the screen.

No. 1 has lowest vote, while no. 2 and 3 are competing with each other.

“Hee, what a surprising result. I didn't think that no. 1 would have the lowest vote.”

Kotori said that while moving the chupa-cups stick in her mouth. The crew member who is sitting on the front seat begins to raise his voices.

“That's because, it's hard to describe, but Nia-chan's clothes is a bit.....”  
“You're right. It would be a sarcastic insult if he praises her clothes.”

<Nail Knocker> Shiizaki and <Deep Love> Minowa then throw their gazes to the monitor while placing their arms on their cheeks.

Perhaps it's just like what they said; Nia's clothes aren't attractive enough to be given praise.

"In that case, isn't no. 2 is a good choice? Initially start from harsh words, and then reveal your kind side behind those words. You can raise her affection by helping her choosing clothes for her. If you do this for a girl, I'm sure they'll definitely fall for you."

<President>Mikimoto said that while pointing his finger upward. However, someone objects to his statement. <Dimension Breaker> Nakatsugawa and <Bad Marriage> Kawagoe raise their voices.

"No, please think twice. Nia-chan didn't come today to buy clothes! Manga, Light Novel, Figurine and Blu-ray! She came to buy such things! Going to the clothes shop will be nothing other than torture!"

"That's right. Besides, judging from story I heard from Shidou-kun, she's obviously okay with such topics. This will be good to shorten the distance between them."

"Fumu....."

Listening to everyone's opinion, Kotori takes a microphone connected to Shidou's income.

"Shidou, its no. 3"

"....."

Receiving such an instruction from the control room, Shidou frowned. Although he had already talked with Nia before, but there's no way he could say such a thing to her in a meeting like this, even Nia probably put on her guard for today. Even so, he cannot afford not to say anything forever. Shidou takes a deep breath, he turns to Nia and takes a look at her whole body, and then he rubs his chin and says,

"H-Hee~ Aren't you wearing clothes that are worth to take off?"

"Eh?"

After that, Nia widens her eyes in surprised.

"Uehehe, what's that, boy? Do you plan to do that to me today? I was thought you're a herbivore judging from your appearance~"

After saying that, Nia pokes Shidou's belly using her elbow.

"Ahaha.....No, that's not what I....."

"Eh? Does that mean we need to go that far in order to seal my Reiryoku? No~, I thought we only need to kiss to finish it off. Oh, no~ Seems like I didn't collect enough information beforehand. Hey, is it okay if I change my panties first?"

"E-Eeh!?"

Shidou raises his voice hysterically, Nia laughed upon seeing it.

“Only joking~, joking~.”

Say that, then Nia made a \*Pan-Pan\* sound by hitting Shidou’s shoulder.

Shidou feels relieved, he relax a bit while showing a wry smile. But,

“I am already wearing my lucky panties.”

“So that was the joking part!?”

In response to Nia’ words, Shidou screamed once again.

“Ahahahaha!”

Then, Nia couldn’t help but to laugh while holding her stomach.....Apparently, that was also a joke.

“The tension is pretty high, huh~.....”

From the income, Kotori’s voice can be heard.

“But well, it doesn’t seem to be a bad reaction at all. We’ll keep going at this pace.”

“Y-Yes..... That’s right.”

Shidou replies back with a voice that couldn’t be heard by Nia.

But, upon noticing Shidou’s state, Nia came closer to him, and she looks into Shidou’s face.

“Ng~? Ah, perhaps you’re currently talking with the command room?”

“Eh!? No, that’s-“

“I was wondering if that strange flying thing is actually a camera. Hey~, Kotori-chan~, can you see me~?”

Nia gave a \*Peace\* pose while looking upward. Looking at her strange behavior, all the pedestrians are looking at Nia for a moment. But soon they avert away their gaze immediately as they lost interest.

“.....Yees, I can see you. Close-----ly~”

After receiving such action, such a sentence can be heard ringing in Shidou’s ear.....Somehow, just by hearing her voice, Shidou can imagine Kotori’s depressed expression.

But that was obvious. After all, with the power of Nia’s angel <Rasiel>, she could figure out what Shidou and the others are going to do.

Making her Dere during the date and then sealing away her Reiryoku, those things have been known by the target. Even though they had already prepared everything beforehand, the opponent seems to be hard to take down.

Upon looking at the situation, Shidou lets out a sigh.

“..... She is looking at you closely.”

“Aah~. There’s no single camera that can be seen at all. How Hi-tech~”

Then Nia observes her surroundings to look over the hidden camera. Afterwards, she express her admiration and bends her body before making a “Yosh” sound after giving a raising her hands out into the air. Then, Nia turns towards Shidou and bows to him.

“Well, please take care of me today. You can try to persuade me as you like.”

“A-Aah.....Alright.”

She said that while facing him directly, making Shidou somehow feels terribly embarrassed. Shidou then replies back to her with a red face.

However, Nia doesn’t seem to noticing this and just looks towards the town.

“Well then..... Let’s go to my old Akiba.”

Then, she begins to walk while rolling the suitcase.

“-----Hey, I’ll take that. It must be hard to take that just by yourself.”

“Ah, really? Yah~, boy really is a gentleman~”

Then Nia made a \*tsun-tsun\* sound by poking his upper hand. Shidou laughed while taking the suitcase from her.

After that, Nia opens and closes her empty hands.

“Heh? My hands have become empty now. What should I do? Do you want to hold hands?”

“Eh?”

Nia let out her words with such a casual tone that Shidou widens his eyes. Who would’ve thought that he would suddenly be offered such thing?

Upon seeing Shidou’s reaction, Nia creates an “Aargh---face”, then she begins to poke her own head in comical way.

“Sorry-sorry. That’s right; in this timing it should be boy who says that.”

“O-Ooh.....That’s right.”

Shidou reaches out his hand while somehow feeling embarrassed.

“Nia.....Do you wanted to holding hands?”

After that, Nia hunches her shoulders for some reasons and averts her gazeaway.

“Eeh, suddenly doing that in our first meeting is a bit.....”

“Aren’t you the one who said that first!?”

Shidou replies back to her with a high-tone voice. Nia laughs while holding her stomach.

“No~, hahaha, I’m joking, joking.”

And then they hold hands. Since Nia didn’t wear any gloves, Shidou can sense the coldness of Nia’s hand.

“Well, let’s go.”

“A-Aah.”

Nia pulls Shidou away as they begin walking alongside the suitcase that is being rolled.

A high-pitch voice can be heard coming from the intercom blaming Shidou for that.

“Wait Shidou, you shouldn’t be led by the girl!”

“Even if you said that.....”

Then, Shidou keeps walking with a bothered face. Nia suddenly stops walking after they arrive in certain street.

After that, Nia releases Shidou’s hand and starts running forward. In the middle of the street, she takes a deep breath.

“Ng~! It’s been a long time~ Akiba! I have come back!”

After saying that, Nia begins looking around.

“As expected, there’s so many things that have changed after a long time~! How fresh!”

“Didn’t you already know about the changes from<Rasiel>?”

Shidou asking her while rolling the suitcase, Nia replies to him with a small voice.

“No, I don’t want to use <Rasiel> as much as possible if it’s not for something important.”

“Eh? Is that so? Why is that?”

“Ng~.....”

Hearing Shidou’s question, Nia seems to hesitate to answer for some reason.

However, she come back to her usual mood and placed her hands on her hip, then she went \*Tch-tch-tch\*, while swinging her finger.

“Didn’t I already tell you before? I dislike spoilers. Besides, there’s a big difference between knowing everything using <Rasiel> and looking and hearing the real one by myself.”

“I-Is that so.....”

“That’s it. -----Well then, let’s go start with books as planned.....”

Then, Nia stops her words; she begins thinking as if remembering something.

“Ah~.....That’s right, ng~”

“Ng? What’s wrong?”

“Nothing, it’s just, isn’t this date a reward for boy? So, we shouldn’t start it with my shopping first, right?”

“No, I don’t mind at all.....”

“No~! That’s no good! I’ll feel bad if we do that.”

After Nia says that, she takes Shidou’s hand again and begins walking.

“Wait, w-where are we going?”

“Ehehe, that’s something you’ll can look forward to~”

After Nia arrives in a certain street, she stops her feet right in front of a building.

“Yes, it’s here~”

“This is.....”

“Yep, this is a Cosplay Shop.”

“Why!?”

Shidou raises his voice hysterically, and then Nia laughs as if she’s enjoying it.

“What’s that.....You get it, right? Look, let’s go, let’s go.”

“Wah.....D-Don’t push me.”

Shidou is forced inside the shop while being pushed by Nia.

Inside the store, there are multicolored clothes being on display in different sections. Starting from anime character’s costumes, to profession costumes, there are a lot of costumes they can choose.

Nia said “Ho-Ho!~\* with sparkling eyes, and then she comes back to Shidou with three costumes on her hands.

“~Alright! Well then, start choosing!”

“Eh?”

Nia speak in similar way as Kotori when she gives Shidou an order. Shidou shrug his shoulders.



“Boy, which costume would you like me to wear!”

1. Nurse cosplay.
2. Maid cosplay.
3. Valkyrie Misty’s Midnight Final Form cosplay.

-----Well, select your choice!”

Shouting, Nia said \*Tik-tik-tik.....\* to create a time limit sound.

On Nia’s hand, there’s a nurse costume and maid costume, and a fancy looking costume which looks more revealing.

“Eh, well, if you asked me so suddenly like this.....Anyway, isn’t the last one is from a completely different genre?”

“Shidou, for now just play along with Nia. Just choose something!”

From the intercom, Kotori’s voice was ringing.

“Damn it! Whatever.....!”

In the middle of confusion, Shidou points to a certain costume on Nia’s hand.

“Then no.1! It’s no.1!”

“No. 1, right?”

“.....Yes.”

“Really? You’re not going to regret it?”

“Y-Yes.....”

“Are you sure you don’t want to choose Midnight Final Form instead?”

“No, if you really wanted to wear that yourself, then why you give me the option of choices in the first place?”

Shidou raises his voice, and then Nia waves her hands.

“Joking-joking. Now is service time anyway~ I’ll wear your preference then.”

“It’s not like I really wanted to see that.....”

“Is that really because of that? Back when you were hospitalized, a beautiful nurse played a prank on you, and since that day you’ll awaken your passion whenever you see a white nurse robe?”

“Can you stop making up a story like that?”

Shidou shouts and Nia responds in laughter.

“Then, wait a minute. I’ll change my clothes.”

Nia went into the dressing room right before her while carrying the nurse costume on her hand.

After closing the curtain, the sound of her changing clothes can be heard. Shidou feels awkward; he averts his gaze away while his cheeks turn red.

After a while, Nia lets out a voice.

“-----Ah, boy-boy. If you’re going to peep, now is the best timing. I just realized it when I was looked into the mirror; a half-wear stocking is really super erotic.”

“No, what are you talking about!?”

Hearing Nia’s words from behind the curtain, Shidou shouts.

“Eh~, but look, isn’t this great? This unexpected synergy.”

After Nia voices her opinion, for a moment, the curtain of the dressing room is opened from inside.

“Huh.....!?”

Upon the unexpected situation, Shidou’s body froze.



Anyhow, Nia has still not finished changing her clothes. The nurse cap she wears is still unbuttoned, revealing her underwear inside. Moreover, the half-wear stocking on her legs, just like she said, looks super erotic.

“Hey~, isn’t this erotic? This is a new discovery.”

“Forget that, change your clothes properly!”

Shidou screams at her, he closed again the opened curtain.

“Well~, since I already achieve my quota, let’s go visit the books stores!”

“.....Y-Yes, let’s go.”

Shidou reply while sweat runs down his cheek.....Somehow, even though the date was just about to begin, Shidou already felt so tired.

However, Nia didn’t notice Shidou’s state. She places her finger on her chin and is thinking about something.

“Which store should we start~? ~Ah, just for reference, which is boy’s faction? Mate? Gema? Tora?”

“Huh.....?”

Suddenly being asked, Shidou flickers his eyes.

“Ah, that’s not it. I meant Animate or Gamers or Toranoana. Ah perhaps, Melon Books, COMIC ZIN, or Shosen Book Tower?”<sup>3</sup>

“.....That’s, may I know, what is the difference?”

“Ng~, they’re quite different, you know? Well, basically the books they sale are the same, but each store offer different bonuses, even their advertisement are also different. Whether its handwriting PoP or a special corner according to the staff’s ideas, they make you always looking forward to it. In case you wanted an old published series, there’s some good recommendations.....Ah, Tora and Melon are also selling fanzine; they even keep stock for limited edition works from certain circles. In short, both of them are a must to visit.”

Suddenly, Nia became so talkative. Sweat fell down on Shido’s cheeks while saying “I-Is that so.....” to reply her.

“Well, if don’t have any preference, then we’ll just go to a nearby one. Is it alright?”

“Aah, of course.”

After Shidou replies her, Shidou walking along with Nia.

Then Nia stops her legs for a while, from the station, a certain store can be seen right away. In the front shop, there’s various character paintings from the new books all lined up in a stack. There’s manga, game magazines, magazine about seiyuu, and any many more all spread around the wall.<sup>4</sup>

“Uwaaaa.....aaaaaaaaaah!”

When they went inside the store, Nia's eyes let out shining flare as she gives out a scream at that moment. Suddenly, all the customers who were shopping inside the store begin looking at their direction out of surprise.

However, Nia didn't even notice this, and she begins grabbing manga with her hand.

"Uwah, uwah, seriously? Kasamura-sensei's drawing style has changeeeed! And this is even already at volume 25!? Time really passed so faaaaaaaaast!"

Nia takes the manga while screaming out of excitement and then Nia widens her eyes in surprised as if she just found something.

"T-This is.....Kurauchi-sensei's new work!?"

"Ah, that one. Right now it's currently serializing. Do you like Kurauchi-sensei's series?"

"No, it can't be express with only word 'like'~, in fact, my life changed because of [CHRONICLE] from Kurauchi-sensei~. That's why I wanted to become a manga artist in the first place~. Tokiya is my waifu! Even if he's a male character, he's my waifu!"<sup>5</sup>

Upon looking at Nia sudden strange behavior, Shidou made a sly smile.

Even though Shidou already knew already that [CHRONICLE] is a famous series that is getting animated.....But he's not as enthusiastic as Nia is about this.

Then Nia piles up the books and prepares to bring it to the cashier with a cheerful face.

"H-Hey, hey."

After that Shidou rushes toward Nia, and he takes half of the mountain of books from her.

"O-ouch, sorry boy."

"Are you going to buy all of these?"

"Of course! Because of DEM, I haven't read anything for these five years. Since I've already finished my work, I'll be enjoying my whole day~. Ah, of course I'm not intending to buy the newest volume only, I'll collect the entire volumes, you know?"

"O-Oh."

Sweat ran down Shidou's cheek. Nia smiles while paying for the books at the cashier. Nia put those books into suitcase that Shidou brought along.

"Well, then let's go to the next floor, the next floor."

After that, Nia and Shidou went on the elevator.

Compared to the first floor, the second floor is filled with even more books. Not only are the latest books and special corner already setup, there are also various genres of manga lined up on the bookshelves.

“The first floor is basically for newly released books. The main force is here.....Eh, fu-fuaaaaaaaaah~. This one is already released too!? I must buy this~.....”

“W-what’s that, out of the blue.....Eh, that is-“

Shidou looked at the book on Nia’s hand and knits his eyebrows.

However he cannot see it clearly. Nia is holding one copy of the novel book, but.....On the front cover, there’s an illustration of two beautiful men half naked and tangled each other. There’s a title written on its Obi which he has never heard before. What does ‘My Caleidbluf’ means?

“A-Ah---.....”

Even though Shidou doesn’t know every detail, he already knew such a genre really exist. His reaction seems a bit bothered by it until the point where he lost the ability to form coherent words.

Upon seeing his reaction, Nia let out a sigh while smiling nihilistically.

“Fuh, those who doesn’t have otome circuit won’t understand.....”<sup>6</sup>

“.....That’s, do you know the right way to use it.....?”

“Of course I do. That’s because a pro would be able to judge an attribute of an object just by looking at it once.”

After saying that, Nia put the books to the self temporarily and creates a peace sign with both of her hands. Between her fingers, she is looking at Shidou while pausing. And then, she seems to be analyzing something.

A few seconds afterward, she widens her eyes and continues her words.

“-----[Oblivious – Sou-uke]”

“Hey, wait, what did you just classified me as!?”

Even though he doesn’t understand very well the meaning, somehow he feels like it’s not something good. Then, he shouts in protest at that instant.

“Ahaha. That’s fine, that’s fine. Since I’m not an expert, my accuracy level isn’t high anyway. The real expert can find the hidden potential from you.”

Even though Shidou doesn’t know what she means by its fine, Nia explains that with full-confidence.

Somehow making Shidou cannot object to her; he lets out sigh.

“But..... Nia sure has large extent of interests; you read books from various genres. Just now too, you bought shoujo manga and a hard-boiled manga.”

“Well~ since I’m quite omnivorous. Basically there’s no genre I cannot read anyway~. If I should explain, I like something being written which holds the author’s passion~.”

“Passion.....Huh.”

“Yes-yes. That one is amazing you know. It’s in a fantasy world, even though in the beginning the prince and the knight give it a cliché feeling, but actually it’s an NTR story. The author’s passion of [I wanted to write this, do you have any complaint!?] can be felt~. No~, the scene where Orpheus becomes a prisoner of the enemy in volume 3 is truly great. I never thought it could be use that way.....”

Then she takes again the book she had placed on the shelf moments ago. Nia begins her speech again. Shidou, who cannot really follow her, can only reply back with “I-Is that so.....”.

Noticing Shidou’s state, Nia sticks out her tongue.

“Aah, sorry-sorry. Maybe it’s still too early for boy. Wait a minute. After I finish paying for these, I’ll show boy a fun place to go.”

“Fun place.....?”

Shidou tilted his head, while Nia smiles. She brings along huge amount of books that she just picked for the cashier to pay.

And then after a walk out from the store, they are now walking along the street. Nia stops in front of a store; seemingly, it is a PC Shop.

“Looks, it’s here.”

“Here is....., I’m not really into PC or something like that.....”

“Aah, that’s not it-that’s not it. Come here.”

After Nia said that, she pulls Shidou and leads him to come into the store.

And then, they stop in a certain corner. She turns back to Shidou.

“Come, choose anything you like boy. Since today is a special day, I’ll buy you anything you really want from the display goods lined on that corner.”

-----Then, Nia points to a package with a girl wearing dangerous clothes illustrated on it.

“T-This is.....”

“Yep.Eroge.”

“I’m still a second year high school student!?”

“Eeh!? A high school’s student cannot play eroge?”

“Which world did you live in?”

Shidou shouts, while Nia went, “The culture is different~!” with hyperbola surprised face.

“I see~.....The times have changed.”

Nia said that while nodding to herself and folding her arms, her facial expression began to change right away.

“But~, you too are a little bit interested, aren’t you? Eeh?High school boy. With so many treasures in front of you, hasn’t that part of your body started to go out of control due to being moved emotionally?”

Nia smirked while saying that, and then she pokes Shidou’s ribs with her elbow.

“Wait.....S-Stop it already.”

“Ehehe. What’s that~. This isn’t something you should be embarrassed about. Aren’t sexual desire one of three human’s biggest desires apart from appetite and sleeping?”

“Even if it’s true, but still!”

“But, even though human will die if they don’t eat or sleep, they don’t die if they didn’t have sex. Sexual desire really is strange, isn’t it? Even though leaving a descendant is important enough for sure, why it included in the three categorizes? ‘Isn’t it just like the strongest man of four heavenly kings hasn’t really had any special powers?’”

“No, isn’t it you who brought up about the three biggest human desires in the first place?”

“If sexual desire really is an essential’s element for life, then the virgin male and virgin girl in society should be set free.”

“That’s what are you talking about since then!?”

Shidou screams, while Nia just laughs in response to him.

“Ah~, sorry-sorry. Somehow I derailed my speech~”

Nia said that without any hesitation, then she creates a serious facial expression while holding her chin with her hand.

“.....Anyway, what kind of girl someone like boy likes? Naki-ge? Chuuni-ge? Ryoujoku-ge?”<sup>7, 8, 9</sup>

“No, like I said.....”

Then, Shidou scratches his head while replying to her; a voice can be heard ringing from the intercom.

“-----Wait a minute, Shidou. Choices just appeared!”

“Right now!?”

Shidou rises up his voice without caring it can be heard by Nia or not.

-----A few minutes after that, the two of them have not had lunch yet, so they visit the nearby hamburger shop.

“Waa~! I’m satisfied-I’m satisfied. I’m really satisfied~”

“Aah. Although this is the first time that I’ve walked around Akiba for this long, this is surprisingly enjoyable.”



Shidou let out a sigh and replies back to Nia. By the way, the rucksack Nia brought and the suitcase Shidou's keep rolling has been full, the weight is several times heavier than before. Since the figurines and stuff are already filling the suitcase, they should expand the carry cart by folding the rubber's belt around suitcases.

Somehow, rather than looking like a shopper, now they looks like a vendor instead.

But of course that was only natural. Anyhow, after that Shidou and Nia went to the figurine store and visited several books stores that held limited edition sales. There, Nia spent her money freely on manga, light novel and material books. Afterwards, she also bought several Anime Blu-ray disks, particular figurines, and they even went to visit the Hobby Shop to check the latest version of analog game.

Of course, that doesn't mean Shidou only got pulled by Nia all the way. With support from <Ratatoskr>, he did several actions to raise Nia's affection level, and all of them got the best response in return.

"See~? As expected, treasures must buy in direct way~. Although buying online using mail order is convenient, in the end the sensation we feel is incomparable with buying directly."

"Aah~.....Somehow I can understand a little bit."

Shidou says his agreement while nodding to her. ....Well, In Shidou's situation, what is floating in his mind is related to food instead. Although the order that being delivered to his home is very convenient, but going around the store while thinking what kind of menu he should cook is one thing that he could always enjoy.

"Ehehe, boy also understands, huh. Something convenient is good, but they cannot surpass the sensation coming from the real thing."

After saying that, Nia smiles widely.

Being associate with her all day, Nia sure like laughing.

Even though sometimes she brought up a topic that he doesn't know how to respond, but she's frank and open, and he feels that she's such a good girl. Looking at her smile, Shidou think that way unintentionally.

At the same time, the sensation of mission that had been fading away begins to float again inside his mind and is getting stronger by the second.

Right, Shidou must protect this girl no matter what.

In order to do that, he must raise her affection level and kiss her.

And then, as if sensing Shidou's feelings, Kotori's voice can be heard ringing from the intercom.

"-----That's good. Anyway, it's been a while since the date has going smoothly, right?"

Kotori said that jokingly.

But thinking about it carefully; certainly (except after the sealing), he has never gone on a date this smooth before. There's no affection level drop because of the wrong choices, nor did he get attacked by her. He is just purely enjoying conversation while shopping. Actually, this made Shidou forget about his mission for a little bit.

-----However,

“.....!? C-Commander! Look----“

As if following the atmosphere, the other crew members also raise their voices.

“What happened, Minowa?”

“Please take a look at this value rate.....! This is Nia-chan affection level graph, but.....This whole day, her affection level didn't change from the initial value.....! This is at best the friendship level.....! Even if he kisses her now, perhaps he won't be able to seal all of her Reiryoku!”

“W-What did you say!?”

“Eh.....?”

Upon hearing unexpected words from the income, Shidou knits his eyebrow.

Noticing this, Nia became surprised and changes her facial expression.

“.....Ah~, perhaps, something happened to Kotori-chan and the others?”

“Eh? No, that's-“

After she hits the bull's-eye, Shidou couldn't answer back. Nia scratches her head as if she could guess everything.

“Ng~, perhaps I'm right? Affection level. You can't seal me if my affection level doesn't surpass certain level.”

“.....”

Shidou paused for a while, and thought “How did she know?” Such question appears in his mind. But-----Right away, he remembers that any secret is meaningless in front of Nia.

“Well~.....You know, I, it's uneasy for me to keep living while being targeted, I would appreciate it if you could seal me.....But as expected this is useless. I'm sorry; I made you go through this useless errand.”

“D-Did I do something that hurt your feelings?”

After Shidou said that, Nia scratch her cheeks as if it's something hard for her to say, then she continue hesitantly.

“No~....., that's, that's not it. It's more like it's because of my own problem.....”

“Eh?”

Being asked back, Nia made a wry smile and replies.

“-----The truth is.....I've never fall in love with anything but 2D.....”

“.....Huh?”

Upon hearing such unexpected words, Shidou widens his eyes in surprised.

## Translation References and Notes (Chapter 2)

1. Dōjin (同人) a term used to refer to amateur self-published works, including but not limited to manga, novels, fan guides, art collections, music and video games.
2. Grilled mackerel dish, often used a side dish used in bento boxes.
3. Animate, Gamers, Toranoana are all real anime stores in Akihabara, Japan.
4. Seiyuu is a Japanese voice actor.
5. A waifu is a fictional character from non-live-action visual media (typically an anime, manga, or video game) that one is attracted to and considers a significant other.
6. An Otome game is story based video game that is targeted towards the female market. There is the occasional yaoi genre involved in Otome at times.
7. Naki-ge is "crying game/sob story game", which usually refers to games with depressing stories that get resolved in the end.
8. Chuuni-ge, refers to chunnibyou. It's a game genre with self-obsession and sudden surge of egotism that occurs in teenagers around the ages of 14-16. Typically, they tend to develop an overblown sense of and desire for their own importance.
9. Ryoujoku-ge refers an 18+ genre where NTR are a common occurrence.

## Chapter 03: Very Well, Then 2D is What You Need

### Part 1

“.....It can't be true. For such a thing to.....?”

Sitting on the chair inside the basement control room of <Ratatoskr>, Kotori mumbled desperately.

However that was natural. At any rate, the targeted Spirit herself had already declared that she will never fall in love with anything but 2D.

“2D.....In short, something like manga or anime characters?”

“I-I think so.....”

Sitting on the lower spot of the control room, <President> Migimoto said that with sweat coming down his forehead. Shidou's voice echoed from the speaker installed in the control room.

“W-What should I do.....?”

Right now, on the large monitor of the control room, Shidou's figure could be seen reflected inside a lavatory. In order to discuss with the control room, he used going to the bathroom as an excuse to temporarily separate from Nia, who is still in the hamburger shop.

.....Well, although Nia could know about their conversation if she really wanted to, there's no sign that she will take out <Rasiel> for now.

Though, that's why they should think up something to change the situation. Kotori placed her hand on her chin.

“Well, even if you asked me.....Although Miku's hatred towards men was quite troublesome too, this time I really can't think of anything.....”

In response to Kotori's words, Nakatsugawa raised his voice.

“But, nowadays there are numerous youths who also have the same situation. Those people like anime and manga characters. Well, those characters are made in order to be loved by readers and viewers, which mean that they have ideal personalities. Moreover, they're all handsome and beautiful. With that standard, of course there'll be a huge gap in comparison with a real human being.”

“You sure know a lot about that.....”

Kotori commented with her eyes half-opened. That's reminds her of Nakatsugawa's second title as <Dimension Breaker>. In fact, he's a romance master who has 100 waifus.

However, Nakatsugawa went \*Tch, Tch\* while shaking his finger.

“Commander, I'm also okay with Seiyuu.”

“.....Aah, sure.”

Kotori shrugged her shoulders while letting out a sigh.

But, there's some truth in the opinion itself. Creating a difficult face, Kotori continued.

“The gap between reality, huh.....But, in that's the case, doesn't that mean anyone would be alright as long as they're 2D?”

“Of course! All of my beloved brides are also chosen from my more than 20 years of Otaku Life, and they're all beautiful girls!”

“Alright, alright. Let's leave that behind. Nia also has a liking towards a character, right? Certainly, she did say something about liking a certain character, didn't she?”

“I'm sure it's Tokiya from [Chronicle]. He has a cool personality and is the type of character popular amongst women.”

“Fuun.....I see. In short, Nia could love that character, couldn't she?”

After saying that, Kotori made a \* Nii\* sound after creating a wicked smile.

“.....Huh?”

On the other hand, Shidou can be seen over the screen, he's sweating from his forehead because he can somehow feel something unpleasant there.

## Part 2

“Ng~.....”

Nia sat down on the chair inside the hamburger shop; she pulled the straw of the empty juice up and down.

She already finished eating the hamburger as well as the potatoes, and since her stomach is already full, they should be leaving from the shop now but.....It has been twenty minutes since Shidou went to toilet. Nia feels truly tired of waiting for him even for a while.

“Ng~, It's not like I'm interested on commenting other's people physiological phenomenon, but this is a bit too long~. Is he currently adjusting his makeup or something~?”

Speaking to herself, Nia stirred the straw on her hand like before, -----Then she remembers something right away.

“No.....I see. Perhaps he's discussing with control room right now?”

Well, if that's the case, then it can't be helped. Anyhow, it's Nia who already threw a fatal bomb to Shidou and the others earlier.

“.....No good, it seems I already did something bad-----“

Since the beginning, she already understood that she couldn't love a real human being at all. Seeing that, Nia felt guilty about her behavior to Shidou.

Although, what she said earlier to Shidou wasn't a lie.

Actually, Nia doesn't mind losing her Spirit power. If possible, she really wished for her power to be sealed away.

That's why; she plotted her meeting with the boy who could seal a Spirit's power by making them Dere and kiss them-----Shidou.

Perhaps if it was Shidou, she expects herself to be able to open her heart to him.

However, the result didn't cause a change.

It's not like she disliked Shidou or such. Rather, she's really grateful to him for helping her escape from the DEM transport aircraft by shooting it down back then, and the date today has also been enjoyable

But.....It's still useless. Nia cannot open herself to another person.

“No matter how good the person is, as long as they're 3D human being..... I can't take it.”

Nia gave a sigh and she shakes her head. As expected, there's no other way.

Then, over there, a signal of someone appearing came from Nia's back. Seemingly, Shidou had already back from the toilet.

“Aah, you're back, boy. Well, let's go-----“

Then,

When Nia turned her head, for a moment, her body's movement paused.

“Eh.....?”

Over there isn't the person that she expected. Instead, that person was wearing a worn-out mantle over his body, and his forehead and arms are also covered with bandages. In addition, there's a sword hanging on his hips. He's a man whose style looks like a wild traveler.

He has long hair and dirty looks. -----There's no doubt. He is.....

“T-Tokiya.....?”

Being dumbfounded, she gave out a surprised voice.

That's right. The one who was standing there is Nia's first love. That man is Tokiya from [Chronicle].

“.....”

Shidou stood in front of Nia, as if trying to restrain his nervousness. He struggled to create an extremely calm facial expression.

Though in fact, Shidou's heart was beating violently as if it was going to explode.

That's right. Shidou's outfit right now appeared to be something you won't see outside of some anime convention. Even if it was in Akihabara, this kind of thing still looks unusual. All of the store's customers started at Shidou out of interest.

Shidou faced Nia's direction; she is looking at him with a dumbfounded expression.

"-----Don't hinder me, woman."

With a lower voice, Shidou tried to mimic Tokiya from [Chronicle] by talking like him based on his memories about that character.

After that, Shidou moved toward Nia and sat next to her.

Nia's shoulder was shaking; she corrected the position of her glasses and stared at Shidou's face.

"T-Tokiya.....? Why....."

Then, Nia widened her eyes as if finally realizing something.

".....Eh, boy?"

"What are you talking about? You don't have any right to call me a boy."

".....!"

Shidou gave a cold glance toward Nia while saying that, Nia choked a little. Her cheeks turned slightly red.

Moments later, a voice rang from the intercom in Shidou's ear.

"T-This is.....!"

"What happened?"

"What! Nia-chan's excitement rate is rising!"

"The affection level is rising, even if it's only a little bit!"

"....."

Somehow, the plan was working pretty well. Shidou felt relieved without showing it on his face.

"Hoo~.....Hee~....."

Nia was looking at Shidou carefully from the top of his head to his tiptoes. She nodded to herself and made a pose as if she's an art critic who was gazing at a painting.

“Amazing.....Isn’t the quality very good? It’s totally different from a poor quality costume. Up until now, I already seen various kinds of Tokiya’s costumes, but I’ve never seen anyone that had a quality like this.”

Then, she took his mantle’s cuff and she blushed out of excitement. ....Honestly, Shidou isn’t sure whether she was interested on him or was only admiring his costume.

Though, since her affection level had already risen, he should continue with the plan now. Shidou turned aside and brushed off Nia’s hand from his mantle.

“You’re annoying, woman.”

“Haa.....”

Shidou said that with a blunt tone, Nia bended her body while her face blushed furiously.





“Her affection level is rising again.....!”

“At this level.....He can do it!”

From the intercom, he heard a large roar from the crew members’ voices.

Shidou tried his best to speak as similar as possible to Tokiya’s.....Somehow, that thing has touched Nia’s heartstring. For some reason, Nia couldn’t calm down. She began to fix her messy hair.

At the moment, from Shidou’s intercom, a fanfare sound rang.

“Shidou, it’s the time! Her affection level has already reached safe zone for sealing! Don’t lose this chance!”

“.....!”

Shidou’s body stiffened upon hearing Kotori’s words.

Don’t lose this chance-----This means, right now is the right timing for kiss her.

Although they’re currently in a public location.....If he lost this good opportunity, he doesn’t know when the chance will come again.

Shidou made up his mind. His heart is beating fast but he cannot show it on his face. Slowly, he changed his body position while looking at Nia intensely.

“Eh...? What’s wrong?”

“Shut up.”

Hearing Shidou’s command, Nia closed her mouth obediently.

Shidou placed his hand on Nia’s shoulder, while the other hand is lifting up Nia’s chin.

After that, he slowly brought his lips closer to hers.

Even though it’s not a proper way to do it, but this is something he needed to do in order to seal a Spirit’s Reiryoku.

-----But,

“.....Wait.”

His lips stopped right in front of hers.

Nia let out a cold voice that feels different from the enthusiastic tone she had up until now.

Then, an alarm indicating a dangerous mental state rang \*Bii! Bii!.\*

“Shidou, the affection level is falling down rapidly!”

“.....Eh?”

Shidou unintentionally let out his natural voice, and then Nia pushed herself away from Shidou's shoulders.

After that, \*-----Haa\* Nia gave out a heavy breath as she scratched her hair.

"Hey.....What are you doing?"

"Huh? What the....."

"Tokiya would never lay his hand on a woman, you know! Think with common sense! Tokiya is currently traveling aimlessly in order to chase after enemy who murdered his little sister who also became his lover, Hibari!? In the middle of lonely travel, he encounters Ryougo, Kotetsu and the others. Through fighting with them, he started understanding the feeling of friendship!"

Nia is shouting as if she's a different person. Shidou felt overpowered by her and got pushed back onto the chair.

"Basically it's Toki x Ryou! But Toki x Ko also works! If with woman, it's only alright with Hibari if it's inside the dream world or reflection of the past! There's no room for me to get into that kind of beautiful world! I'm fine with only being a watcher! I'm a lonesome observer! Rather, I'm fine with being a wall!"

"O-Oi, calm down, Nia....."

Shidou tried to calm her down, but Nia pointed a sharp gaze at him.

"Tokiya would never say such thing!"

"Uwaaa.....!"

"-----In order to make me dere at you, then you should become 2D first!"

Shidou got kicked by Nia on his butt, driving him out from the hamburger shop.

### **Part 3**

".....In short, it was no good at all."

Shidou had already returned from Akihabara.

Shidou said that while breathing heavily, his face and body were covered with plaster all over.

By the way, after that Nia, who couldn't accept her beloved character being blasphemed, left the store in anger and went back to her house alone. -----Of course, she brought along the luggage filled with goodies and books that she had bought.

Right now, Shidou was inside the control room of <Ratatoskr>'s underground facility. In front of the large monitor, he was being started at by Kotori and from below there's <Fraxinus> crew who were sitting down.

“Arara.....You got pretty beaten up, didn't you?”

“And whose fault do you think it is!? Whose!?”

Shidou said that with half opened eyes, Kotori shrugged while saying \*Yare-Yare\*.

“It can't be helped? Since she declared that she only likes 2D, what we can do is limited. Besides-----Even though the result ended up in failure, at least her affection level had risen for a moment. This is important data.”

Even if you say so, that affection level came from facing Tokiya, right? We can't use the same method again, so it's kind of useless.....

..”

“.....No.”

Objecting to Shidou's words, Reine let out a reply as she was sitting in the below seat of control room.

“.....That's not quite true. From this result, it's indicating that even if her beloved character turns into 3D, the affection level she has for that character will remain the same.”

“I-I see.....But, wouldn't the result would be the same? No matter how much I tried to keep calm, I don't have confident that I could be able to act well enough as her beloved character to the level that it could convince Nia. Even if I could seal her that way, what could be coming next might be frightening.....”

Shidou's face turned pale. That was what concerned Shidou.

Naturally speaking, Shidou isn't Tokiya. Anyhow there must be a gap appearing in some parts that made Shidou unable to keep up to Nia's ideal standard. If that's happen, then Nia's mental state will become unstable and break the seal right away, and her Reiryoku will come back to her.

However, Reine seemed to understand what Shidou was worried about, and then she continued.

“.....Anyway, I have an idea.”

“An idea.....?”

“Yes.”

Kotori answered Shidou's question. She pointed towards the monitor in front of them.

Over there, Nia's figure can be seen from an autonomic camera reflected on the monitor.

“Maybe what Shidou said is true. There's no way you can keep continuous acting as a character. -----But, if there's a character who Shidou can play perfectly as and he can continue to do so, then it will be a different case, right?”

“Huh.....? Well, even if that's right.....There's no way such character exists.”

"We'll just see. It'll arrive soon."

"Arrive?"

Shidou asked, as Kotori made a \*Nii\* face while smiling.

".....Ah~"

## Part 4

Nia is in her mansion's room. She was covered by books all around her. She closed the manga she just finished read moments ago, then she embraced it to her chest to calm herself down.

Even though she purchased a mountain of books as if she was in some kind of festival event, there's another thing that keeps bugging her. She can't even feel the enjoyment of reading her new books.

Though, it's not like she doesn't know what is bugging her.

That's right. That boy..... Itsuka Shidou.

"Ng~....."

Nia placed the manga on the mountain of books beside her bed, and then she hugged her pillow.

".....As expected, it isn't right to go home alone."

After she remembered about that, she shook her body.

Nia, upon looking at Shidou dressed up like Tokiya, yet behaving unlike Tokiya, made her angry .....Thinking carefully, she even said lots of cruel things. As someone who is older, she should've showed a more mature response. Anyway, it's not like Shidou was doing that merely to make fun of Nia.

Nia gave out a small sigh; she touched her lips with her index finger.

".....Perhaps I should've let him kiss me. -----But, if I couldn't open my heart to him, then he wouldn't be able to seal my Reiryoku and it would have been meaningless....."

And then, Nia tightened her hug on the pillow.

Even though Nia hasn't tried to find out how <Ratatoskr> was calculating her affection level, but Nia's rate must not have reached the level where the seal could be done.

Right. Nia cannot open her heart to 3D humans.

"Ah~ My~ What should I do~? Tell me, Rasielmon~!"

She kicked her feet and kept asking. But of course, no one was around to answer her.

<Rasiel> is an omniscient angel. However, it can't tell Nia what she should do.

“.....”

Nia looked up to the ceiling and slowly raised her left hand.

Nia gave a command inside her mind for <Rasiel> to manifest right away from an empty space. After that she opened the front cover, then Nia will be able to obtain any information she wished to know.

For example-----Right. What is Shidou doing right now?

“.....”

For a moment, Nia gave out another sigh and drew back her hand.

The reason is simply. \*Ding-Dong\*, the room's intercom rang.

“.....Who's that?”

Nia slowly lifted up her body, and began walking to the intercom's screen.

Then she pushed the call button and began to speak.

“Yes-yes~, who's that?”

“Excuse me, I'm a postman. I'm delivering package addressed for Honjou Nia.”

“A package?”

Nia tilted her head and thought. But, she doesn't know what it is.

“What is this.....Well, fine, please bring it inside.”

“Understood.”

Nia pressed the button on the interphone and she opened the auto-lock.

Not so long after, the chime before the door gave a clicking sound.

“Alright-alright.....”

When the door opened, the postman, who is wearing a hat covering his eyes, came in with a little package on his hands.

“Please put the stamp and sign over here.”

“Well then, the signature.....Alright.”

“Thank you very much. Please excuse me.”

The postman bowed to Nia and left the room.

Nia closed the opened door. Nia unpacked the package's wrapping. Then, inside the package appeared a game package with some handsome boy drawn on it. A message was written on a thin paper.

"Ng.....? What's this-what's this? With full of gratitude, we present a special personal edition of our new PC game.....?"

Nia scratched her head. Come to think of it, in the past she had sent several surveys from game companies many times. Perhaps this is related to that.

".....Well, its fine. If they send me something, then I'll accept this. Since my mood now is all gloomy, perhaps I should give it a try?"

Nia walked along the corridor to the work room, she turned on her PC and inserted the disk. Then the installation began right away, finally the game's interface appeared on the screen.

"[Love Me My Little Shido ~Girl's Side~]? Fuun..... Perhaps this is a high school Otome game?"

Nia operated the mouse and clicked [START] button.

Then, the screen to input the protagonist's name appeared.

"Ng~, there's no default name at all? Well then, it's Nia."

Nia imputed her real name, and the game began.

The protagonist is a second year high school student who just transferred. Starting from here, Nia will meets with other characters, and she will fall in love with someone here.

Although Nia's home ground is manga, she also loves playing games. Especially, Ren-ai simulation game made for girls like this one. For Nia who couldn't love a 3D human being, she felt very thankful for the game's existence. Anyhow, just by clicking, a cool guy will come and fall in love with her. Nia is also a girl. It's not like Nia doesn't want to fall in love. Rather, she also wanted to feel \*Kyuun-Kyuun\*.<sup>1</sup>

"Funfun, from the construction it seems like this is orthodox simulation game. I guess it's up to the character."

She kept clicking and continued the conversation.

Then, the protagonist Nia was talking with her classmate. A gentle, broad-mindedness atmosphere and a neutral looking boy appeared. His name is-----Itsuki Shidou.

".....Ng?"

Nia tilted her head. Somehow this character resembled with the boy who had been together with her earlier.

".....Well, maybe it's only my imagination."

Then, Nia continued clicking to interact with Itsuki-kun.

“Haha.....Nia is an interesting girl.”

“Uwaa!?”

Upon hearing his voice, Nia widened her eyes.

That’s right. Right now, this character just called out “Nia” in a very natural way.

Of course, moment ago, she indeed imputed Nia as the name of the protagonist. Although in the case of such a game which could called out the protagonist’s name, there are so many games that use a combination of pre- recorded lines for pronunciation.....Besides, the feeling of a game’s pronunciation usually sounds painfully bad.

“Heh~! Amazing~! I didn’t follow it for a while and technology had already advance this much!”

Only with that, Nia’s interest towards the game’s characters increased. She continued the conversation with Itsuki-kun.

Thereupon the musical went \*Don-Don\*, the last order was to decide on a date. Itsuki-kun then asked “Where do you wanted to go?”

And then,

“.....Wha!?”

Normally at this time there will be some choices appearing, but.....There’s none in this game.

Displayed on the screen, there’s a line written on it saying “Please input your desired date plan.”

“How stupid.....Does it mean that I have to input it using my keyboard!? That’s impossible.....”

Though she half doubts it, Nia slowly started entering the keyboard buttons.

“[I wanted to go to buy latest doujin in Akiba].”

And then, Nia pressed the enter button as if saying it could respond.

Then, Itsuki-kun smiled gently.

“So, buying doujin in Akiba, huh? Haha, that seems like very Nia. Of course it’s fine. ---- Ah, but since we’re high school students, no prohibited books allowed, alright?”

“Uoooooooooooooooooh!?”

Upon looking at the reaction, Nia stands up from her chair instantly.

Who would guess that by such a little order, Itsuki-kun could interact with Nia as natural like this? Just what kind of innovation had been created?



Nia went “The power of technology really is amazing-----!”, and she continued the story by clicking.

“-----Hee, I see. Nia likes this kind of book, huh? .....No? It’s not like I mind it. If you could absorbed yourself into something, isn’t it such a beautiful thing?”

Inside <Ratatoskr> ground facility, Shidou was reading the lines appearing on the screen while wearing a headphone.

The gameplay has been recorded into the monitor. Whenever, the input sentence will come to their place and Shidou will give a real time answer.

“.....Hey, this is really alright, isn’t it?”

When the lines had ended for a while, Shidou switched off the microphone and looked to Kotori who was sitting behind.

“Yes. Her affection level is rising quite well. After Nia feels satisfy enough with the game, it’ll be OK for Shidou to appear before her as [Itsuki-kun]. This time, there’s no need to act anymore. That’s because this character is Shidou himself.”

Saying that, Kotori went \*Nii\* and lifted the tip of her lips.

Right. This was <Ratatoskr>’s plan.

Nia was playing the game made by <Ratatoskr>. Shidou will do the voice over for the character, so Shidou will be loved by her. ....That is no complex conversation.

“Anyway, how did you make this game? You couldn’t have made such a thing in a short time, huh?”

After Shidou said that, then Reine replied back with a sleepy voice.

“.....Well, just to make sure. Be prepared and have no regrets, isn’t that so?”

“I wonder just what kind of thing you intended to do by using this game in the first place.....”

Shidou made a wry smile while sweating. Then, Kotori’s voice can be heard coming from behind.

“Look Shidou, don’t just stand there. The next line is coming.”

“Y-Yes.”

Shidou turned to the monitor’s direction; he took the microphone and continued acting as <Itsuki-kun>.

On the other side of the monitor screen, they are showing Nia who was currently playing the game. While on the other side, there’s Nia’s mental state graph. I see, like Kotori said, everything is going smoothly.

However, Shidou said that while knitting his eyebrow. ....Somehow, he felt like they are forgetting something important.

“Waah~..... This latest game sure is amazing. Since this is only the personal edition, I think I should buy the full version once it is released.”

Then, while Shidou was thinking about that, Nia on the screen looks so satisfy and keeps smiling.

-----And,

“That’s? When is the full version release date? Anyway, the company who create this game is.....”

While saying that, Nia raised up her left hand and a book appeared from nowhere.

“.....! Ah-----“

Nia touched the page of <Rasiel>.....Her facial expression became cloudy in an instant.

Slowly, Nia gave out a voice filled with anger.

“.....What, so this is your doing!”

“Nia gave out a sigh. She stands up from the chair and moved exactly to the direction of the automatic camera. She threw a stare full of anger to the control room.

“.....You know, I understand your goal for doing this. But don’t you think that this has already crossed the line? Not only have you blasphemed my Tokiya, now you’re also playing around with my Otome heart.”

“N-Nia, no, this is....”

“Itsuki-kun better shut up!”

“.....A-Alright.....”

“Anyhow, if you do this kind of thing again from now, I’ll never forgive you anymore. ---Next, I also need some privacy. Can you please take the automatic camera out from my room? Moreover, you know what will happen if you violate it again.”

Nia said that while turning away.

## Part 5

“.....Everyone has already gathered, right? I think I’ve already told you the story.....Seems like we got into some trouble.”

Kotori placed her elbow on the large round table. She spoke with a difficult face.

But that was only natural. Anyway, this wasn’t the first time that a girl with a unique preference appeared. However, they already failed twice with their tactics.

“2D.....That’s means she’ll only love something like manga characters?”

The girl standing next to Kotori has short, boyish hair, and a face like a doll. She spoke with a doubtful tone. She is the Spirit whose Reiryoku had last been sealed by Shidou: Tobiichi Origami.

It's not only her. Right now in <Ratatoskr> ground facility, along with the other <Fraxinus> members and Shidou, all the Spirits who have been sealed by Shidou had gathered here: Tohka, Yoshino, Natsumi, and Yamai sisters.

Although Kotori actually didn't want to include the girls in capturing a new Spirit, but.....Upon facing a new Spirit whose type had never been handled before, she had to ask everyone's advice in turn.

Kotori was also the same as all the other spirits here. Her Reiryoku had also been sealed by Shidou. She thought they could think up something based on their shared experiences.

"Perhaps....."

Kotori replied back to Origami with a pale face, and then a tall girl sitting on the right side shared a comment.

"Ah~, I see~. I also have an idol friend who is the same as her."

Miku, the girl who has long, indigo hair moved her index finger while saying that.

-----This girl is also the same, a spirit. She's a national idol who is currently growing in popularity: Izayoi Miku. Although she has no spare time even after her work is finished, she still came right away after getting a call from Kotori.

"My first love is Sieg-sama~, that's what she said. Ah, Sieg-sama is an anime character by the way. But that's only a created image. In order to get closer to her fans, she chooses to have the same hobby as her fans. Well, that girl has a boyfriend, actually~"

After saying that, Miku made an "Ahaha" sound as she started laughing.

".....It's alright if Nia is the same as that idol.....But looking at her values, I don't think she's lying."

Kotori said that with a sullen face, then Miku went "Ara" while widening her eyes.

On the other side, Kaguya went \*Muu\*.

"Fun, so Honjou Souji was a woman.....She has already succeeded in fooling my eyes."

"Ah, so Kaguya also knows her?"

In response to Shidou, Kaguya nodded.

"Obviously. Even we hurricane children have an interest in these things."

"Information. Kaguya mainly chooses to read Shōnen manga, but she also buys Ecchi manga by inserting it between battle manga and sport manga."

"Wait a minute Yuzuru!"

Yuzuru spoke in a whispering manner as Kaguya covered her mouth with her hand. Kaguya's face went red as she shouted.

"Don't say inappropriate things!? By the way, you're also the same! Doesn't the Shoujo manga that Yuzuru always reads have even more explicit scenes!?"

"Question. Can you please explain what kind of explicit scene? Please explain everything with a detailed example."

"T-That's.....A man and woman on the bed....."

"Repetition. I can't hear very well. Please say it once more."

"U-Ugu.....Muu....."

Kaguya's face went even redder as she created a frustrated-looking face.

Upon watching those two's actions, Kotori clapped her hands.

"Well-well. Although it's good for you to be on good terms, let's do this afterwards. -----  
---Right now, what's important is how to capture Nia."

Once Kotori said that, everyone started at the round table and thought deeply.

A moment later, Yoshino raised her hand slowly.

"Uhm.....Is it alright?"

"Yes, of course."

"That's.....Perhaps, the way to befriend Nia-san is to give her more time, I think. If we face her precisely, I think she will be able to understand Shidou-san's natural goodness."

"Yoshino....."

After Shidou said that, Yoshino's face turned red.

Kotori went "Muu", groaning while placing her hand on her chin.

"Maybe.....That's the more proper method. Even if she only loves 2D beings, if we continuously approach her sincerely, the potential of her opening her heart isn't zero."

"Then, the plan shifts to a long term approach?"

Shidou asked in response to Kotori.

"The worst is that there's no other way to do so..... In the very end that will be the last resort method. While we must do the method carefully, if DEM smells her whereabouts, then there's no guarantee she will be safe. We can't do it too slowly either."

"I-I'm sorry....."

After Kotori said that, Yoshino shrugged her shoulder while apologizing. Kotori shook her head right and left.

“There’s no need to apologize. Truthfully, I also want to pick that method.....If she takes a look carefully, I think she will realize that Shidou can beat those manga characters.”

Kotori said that while averting her gaze away a little, she stirred the chupa-cups stick. Somehow after hearing that, Shidou’s face went a bit red.

Then, accordingly, Tohka, who had previously inclined her head while folding her arms, turned to look at Shidou.

“Hey Shido. Why can Nia only love 2D?”

“Eh? Uhm.....That’s.....  
.”

Although Tohka only threw a simple question, but Shidou couldn’t answer that.

Surely, that’s the root of this problem. Why can’t Nia love anything but 2D.....On the other side, she can’t love a 3D human being.

Kotori also thought about that question. While placing her hand on her chin, she said.

“I’m also a bit curious.....I’ll do some investigation.”

“Eh? Investigation?”

“Somehow, ten years ago Nia must have already become a manga artist. Then, whether she was a real human or a pure Spirit, she must have left some traces of her existence in this world. That will be our clue.”

“I see.....”

Shidou folded his arms while saying that. There’s a point in Kotori’s words for sure.

“Although.....It’s not like there’s always something we can find. Anyway, we should think up a special plan.”

After that, someone responded to Kotori’s words; Natsumi who is sitting next to Yoshino let out a small voice.

“.....If that’s the case, isn’t it better to just follow the person’s preference? Isn’t that the problem in the first place?”

“Even if that’s true.....Both the cosplay and game tactics ended up in failure, you know? Even though crossdressing as a female worked on a certain someone back then.....”

While saying this, Kotori turned to look at Miku. After Miku noticed her gaze, she threw a kiss to Kotori. Kotori let a sigh out of shock and returned her glance.

“.....Although with Shidou, he can’t cross the dimensional barrier. Or perhaps, we should use a road roller or something else to flatten him?”

“H-Hey.....”

While Shidou was sweating, Natsumi raised her finger in response to Kotori's words.

“.....Uhm, what if I use my <Haniel> to transform Shidou's shape into a manga book.....”

“Hasn't the approach to become 2D been somewhat ridiculous since the very beginning!?”

Shidou said that while sweating, as Natsumi puffed her cheeks.

“.....Isn't it obvious that it's merely a joke. Sorry then. Though I'm not a character who could do a joke.....I get it. I'll keep silent. I won't say anything anymore.....”

Natsumi slowly fell down from the chair out of depression. Shidou gave out a voice in confusion.

“N-No, that's not what I meant.....Sorry.”

“Mu~.....”

“N-Natsumi-san.....”

But, Yoshino, who is sitting next to Natsumi, stretched her hand and pulled Natsumi back to her chair.

“-----I see.”

Origami, who had been in deep thought, suddenly raised her voice.

“? What's wrong Origami? Did something come up?”

Kotori asked, as Origami nodded.

And then, Origami said something unexpected.

“Natsumi's plan probably will work out. About Shidou becoming a book.”

Shidou widened his eyes upon hearing Origami's words.

“Eh? W-Wait a minute. Although Nia said that she cannot love anything but 2D, but she means the character in the manga, not the manga book itself you know? Even if I become a book.....”

Shidou said that with a bothered face, on the other side, Natsumi kept staring at him.

“.....Ah, you listen carefully to Origami's words.....Of course you would. That's because my brain quality is different from Origami's. The persuasive power of her words is also obviously different too. No wonder. Because that's obvious already.....”

“T-That's not it.....”

Looking at Natsumi, who got depressed again instantly, Shidou struggled to explain himself to her.

But, as if she doesn't mind it, Origami continued.

"That's not what I meant. I'm not saying to turn Shidou into a book. Instead, I'm saying to create a manga that has [Shidou] as a character in it."

"Wha.....!?"

Upon hearing Origami's proposal, everyone who is sitting in the meeting room raised their voices at the same time. Only Tohka, who didn't react for a moment, then she said "Wha.....!?" as if to match with everyone else's reaction.

"I see....."

Kotori placed her hand on her mouth while making a serious face.

"A manga where Shidou becomes the protagonist.....Huh? Certainly it can be called a 2D character as well."

"H-Hey, hey. Wait a minute. Even if it can work out for a while, the me inside the manga won't be the same as me in real life, isn't it? Won't it end up with the same result.....?"

Shidou responded with a sullen face.

Right. Just by looking at today's example already made them understand that Nia is fairly strict in regards to her favorite character's appearance.

If Nia says that "Shidou won't do such thing!" or something like that, it would cause an identity crisis for Shidou.

But, as if to object that opinion, the Yamai sisters raised up their opinion.

"Fufufu, if that's the case, in order not to detach from reality, isn't it better to just draw something real? ----Thankfully, there's a mountain of material around Shidou that can be used for a manga."

"Consent. If we portrayed Shidou like that, then it won't be the same as tricking Nia with the game back then. As expected from Master Origami. It's a nice idea."

"N-No, even so, Nia has her own personal preference too in the first place, right? More importantly is whether Nia will read it or not, and will she like the character on the book or not....."

"I-It's alright.....!"

Replying to Shidou, the girl who has the same height as Natsumi and a tender look, Yoshino spoke.

"Y-Yoshino.....?"

Shidou widened his eyes upon hearing Yoshino's strong tone, which was different from usual. But Yoshino face turns red out of embarrassment. She gripped her right hand tightly and continued.

"Shidou-san already helped us.....If we draw what Shidou-san did up until now straightly, Nia-san will likes Shidou-san too.....I'm sure.....!"

"U-Uhm....."

Upon hearing Yoshino, who would normally never speak with such strong tone, somehow made him feels embarrassed. Shidou hesitantly mumbled with an awkward tone.

After that, both the crew and Spirits gave their agreement towards the plan.

"Shidou-kun's documentary, isn't it? If that's the case, it will probably work...."

"But, that's also mean that we should draw about the spirits too, right? Is it really alright?"

"What? It's only Nia who's going to read, even if leaked outside, nobody will think it's anything but fiction."

"Ooh.....So Shido will become a manga? That's amazing! I wanted to help too!"

"Kukuku.....Somehow it seems like us Yamai should lend our power."

"Consent. On the 39<sup>th</sup> match, submission illustration showdown, our work got printed together under the title [Rare illustrations from twins!], and we ended up with a tie again."

".....You two really do everything....."

"H-Hey~....."

Shidou raised his voice nervously, but everyone doesn't seem to hear that at all.

Kotori grasped her fist and hits the table to calm everyone's down.

"-----Well then, let's do a vote. Who approves this project to create a manga about Shidou?"

"Yes!"

In response to Kotori's words, everyone raised up their hands except for Shidou.

"....."

Everyone looked towards Shidou.

"Ukh....."

Shidou gave out a sigh, he slowly raised his hand up as well. Everyone went \*Waah\* out of excitement.



“Alright! Everyone has already agreed! Let’s work on the plot right away-----“

Then,

At the moment after Kotori almost finished her sentence, the console installed inside the conference room started ringing a \*Pipipipipi\* sound.

“Eh.....? What sound is that, Kotori?”

Once Shidou asked, Kotori knitted her eyebrows and turned her glance to the console.

“It’s a call. Moreover, it’s from the external line.....? I don’t recognize the number though.....”

Kotori pushed the call button while saying these words.

After that, a familiar voice of a girl can be heard coming from the conference room’s speaker.

“-----Hey. You’re quite the schemer, boy.”

“Wha.....”

Upon hearing that voice, everyone’s face went pale from shock, starting first with Shidou.

“N-Nia.....?”

Right. The voice heard from the speaker is surely the Spirit who has become the main topic of discussion in the conference room.

“Unbelievable! This underground facility’s circuit is encrypted, how come she’s easily--“

Migimoto shouted, however his voice stops halfway.

It seems like he realized something in the middle of his sentence. With the omniscient angel <Rasiel> that Nia holds, whatever encryption or any other security won’t matter for her.

“I see. You’ve heard everything.....Haven’t you?”

“Well yes~. Basically I dislike spoilers, although I don’t want to use <Rasiel> this way, I just don’t want you to playing around with Tokiya or my Otome heart anymore.

With a dry laugh, Nia said that. Upon hearing that tone, Shidou and the others started sweating.

The others also noticed that. Then they started whispering to each other.

“.....S-She’s angry, isn’t she.....?”

“.....Uhm.....It’s feels like she’s really angry.”

“She really likes that Tokiya-san character, doesn’t she~?”

Perhaps Nia didn't take notice towards those whispering comments.....Then Nia continued her words as if to reply to them.

".....Well, though it's fine since you've seemingly change your plan somehow, but that plan, don't you think there's a big hole in it?"

"H-Hole.....?"

"Yes. For example, once the manga is finished, why are you talking with assumption that I'm going to read the book?"

"Wha....."

Shidou widened his eyes.....Certainly there's that kind of possibility.

In the case of a manga lover like Nia, probably Nia will read it unconditionally, but.....Perhaps it can be said that they are only relying on the other party's kindness.

"Isn't it right? My work is super busy, I have a limited number of books I can read, you know? Actually, I haven't even read ten percent of those manga books I've bought today. There's a lot of my favorite series that came out while I was in confinement. Why would I waste my limited free time by reading a manga book drawn by an amateur with ulterior motive like that! Well.....If it was until then I might be willing to read it, but I'm in angry mode right now. I can even defeat the existence named Ashura. As if I would read a book from you all, who've disgraced my Tokiya!"<sup>2</sup>

"N-No way....."

Upon hearing Nia's words, Yoshino created a face that looks like she is almost crying.

"Well, bye! That's it! Stop doing something useless!"

"-----Wait a minute."

But as Nia was going to cut off the call, Kotori placed her elbow on the table and stopped her.

"Uun.....? Aah, you're Kotori-chan? I guess this is the first time we've talk to each other like this. Hi, nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you too."

Kotori replied to her, and continued her words.

"-----Well, I'll go straight to the main problem. From the way you spoke, I think it's..... If it's a book worth reading, then you'll spare some times to read that book, right?"

".....Um? What are you talking about?"

"Please answer. If the manga we create can be better than your own manga at one thing, then it'll be worth reading, right?"

Upon hearing Kotori's words, Nia laughed loudly.

“Ahaha! Well, I think it is. But, even if there’s something amusing in it or not is according to the person themselves. Even though you said that, it’s really amusing. Do you really think that I will think the same way as you?”

“Certainly you’re right about that..... But if that’s the case, isn’t there one absolute standard that we can use to judge it?”

“Absolute standard.....?”

When Nia asked back, Kotori replied back to her with an extremely serious tone.

“Yes. -----It’s the sales amount.”

“Wha.....!?”

It’s not only Nia who raised her voice in response to Kotori’s words. Everyone else who is present inside the conference room also pointed their gaze towards Kotori at the same time.

“Fuun.....How interesting. Are you serious when you said that you can win against me, Honjou Souji, by the sales amount?”

“Yes. If we win, you should obediently read the book.”

Nia kept silent for a few seconds, then she went \*Ahaha\* as she laughed very loudly.

“It’s fine. Let’s see whether you can really win.”

After Nia said that, she cut off the call.

For a while, the conference room fell into a deep silence.

“H-Hey, Kotori. What did you say.....? Our opponent is a pro manga artist you know?”

“It can’t be helped, right? That’s all because she clearly declared that she won’t read the manga.”

“Even if that’s the case.....!”

After Shidou said that in a high pitch, Kotori extended her palm to stop him.

“Calm down. It’s not like I’m not thinking of anything.”

When Kotori said that, she raised up the chupa-chups stick.

## **Part 6**

“.....Haa.”

Nia gave out a sigh while lying down on her bed.

On the side of the bed, there's a mountain of manga and light novels piled up on the stack. However right now she doesn't feel like she wanted to read them. She isn't working on the new manga ideas either. She just kept staring at the ceiling.

She thought about the reason for her current problem. -----Because of the previous information she gained from <Rasiel> and the direct call she did with Shidou, Kotori, and the others.

Whatever they are, drawing a manga with Shidou as the protagonist in order to make Nia read it and make her hold affection towards Shidou himself.

".....They are underestimating me."

Nia pouted her cheeks out of displeasure.

Right. Nia certainly is fond of manga and anime. And her declaration about her never loving anything but 2D wasn't a lie either.

But that doesn't mean that she will love everything as long as they're 2D.

That topic has also become a common misunderstanding amongst Otaku. Creating a popular anime stage in a certain place that is fun to visit, the so-called pilgrimage tactic in order to grow the town's local government, with the thought process that Otaku like these kinds of things, don't they? As long as there is an easy-going moe character present, generally everything will go smoothly. -----Naturally, what an Otaku really likes is an [Interesting Anime]. It doesn't mean they'll like everything as long as its anime. The backbone is also important for a moe character.

The case this time is also the same. Even though Nia has Tokiya as one of her waifu characters (Even though he's a man, he's still called a waifu). In the very end, those characters have an excellent personality that made her hold a high feeling towards them. It's not like that she can go \*Kyun\* at every manga character.

Besides, even if they draw a manga based on a real person as the model, it's not like Nia will be able to open her heart.

"....."

Nia fell into silence; she stroked her left hand gently to the air.

Following that action, a book appeared from the empty space.

<Rasiel>. An angel that knows everything that has happened in this world and Nia's best and worst angel.

"....."

Nia started at <Rasiel>'s front cover without opening it, then she remembered the old memories from the not so distant past.

Although Nia holds an omniscient angel that could know everything in this world, she doesn't have any particular desire or ambition, nor does she ever think to use this power for something bad. She doesn't mind living a peaceful life at all.

Actually, with the help of her personality that allowed her to talk with anyone, Nia felt that it was comparatively easy to interact around in human society.....Well, even though certainly using <Rasiel>'s power was a big help.

However, on a certain time, a curiosity bothered Nia's mind.

"-----How was I born, anyway?"

Thinking again, that was the beginning of all her mistakes.

Back then, if she could have kept her big curiosity and didn't open <Rasiel>, the Nia right now probably would have been a more sensible Spirit.

However, Nia already understood. The reason behind how she became her current self.

...And herself from long ago.

Once she understands that.....No, perhaps it'll be more accurate to say that when Nia remembered it, at that moment, she felt like she wanted to take out all of her stomach contents.

Furthermore, in Nia's mind, she kept producing the feeling of distrust like a poison.

And to make it worst, in Nia's hand exists an angel which could know everything in this world.

Nia began to do some investigation about the human who live around her inside society. From friends, acquaintances, to even the store keeper that she had visited.

-----Then, Nia ended up being alone.

The more she investigated, the more she knows, and the more she cannot stand the creature called human beings.

Somehow even if they have a kind face, there's always a cruel true character hidden inside them. No matter how much love exists, there's always a pitch-black hole inside their heart. Then, Nia became disgusted by creatures called human being.

Though inside human society, it's impossible for her to live without interact with anyone.

That's why Nia masked herself skillfully.

She tried her best not to use <Rasiel> on someone she just met, and interacted with people as if they're a game's NPC.

But inside her heart, there's only one existence which she opened her heart to.

They're those who live in the different world than hers, those who live in a 2D world.

Those manga and anime characters don't have any hidden side of themselves other than the one Nia that can see from them. They will never betray Nia.

And then, Nia sank herself into that world. Until the point she decided on a job where she could create that kind of world herself.

That's why, it's not accurate to say that Nia cannot love anything but 2D.

Nia just cannot open her heart to a real human being.

"That's why.....It's useless."

Nia stared at the ceiling above her while touching <Rasiel>'s cover with her left hand.

For example-----That's it. Like whether Shidou's words are lies or not.

"....."

Nia let out a small sigh; she tried to brush away her curiosity. Before that, she should wait for a while; Nia's desire will bring an undesired result.

Nia already experienced this kind of thing several times. Whenever she became curious, Nia always ended up filling her heart with suspicion.

".....No, I shouldn't."

Talking to herself, Nia returned her hand to its original place.

Then-----Nia gave another sigh and she hates herself for that.

At that moment.....

"-----Ara, ara. In the end, you're not using that angel?"

From the room where there's nobody but Nia, an unfamiliar voice could be heard.

".....! Who!?"

Nia jumped from her bed out of confusion. The books piled up like a mountain around her collapse just like a sliding snow.

Nia looked at her surroundings with her face that looks really cautious. A shadow begins to spread from an ink stain pasted on one side of the wall. -----From there, a figure of a girl began to be seen.

That girl has black hair tied up in an unbalanced twin-tail. Besides, she has white skin contrary to her black hair. She wears a crimson and black colored dress on her body.

However, looking at the appearance of the girl in front of her made both her consciousness and memories all hazy as if they were torn apart into pieces. With an appearance that looks neither like a God nor a Devil. In the middle of her face enshrined a pair of different colored eyes. On her left eye, there are the hands of time engraved on it, \*Kara-Kara\*, the surface of her eye looked entirely like a clock's dial.

This doesn't seem to be reality, looking at this scene is entirely like seeing a dream-----or more likely a beautiful nightmare. For this girl to appear so suddenly, a normal human will surely scream or stand dumfounded.

However, Nia doesn't choose any of them. She lowered her body posture, with full of caution, Nia pointed her hand towards the girl.

"-----Who are you, anyway? Isn't barging in without knocking on the door impolite?"

When Nia said this, the girl placed her hand on her mouth while giggling suspiciously.

"Ufufu, please excuse me for my impoliteness. -----But, there's no need to be so cautious like that, I only want to be your ally. At least for now."

".....Ally?"

Nia narrowed her eyelid and twisted her left hand. Following that movement, a large book appeared like usual. Somehow upon looking that, the girl's eyes sparkled out of interest.

In order to confront the girl, she touched gently <Rasiel>'s cover. The pages began flipping automatically, and then a faint light shined from the pages.

After that, she touched the page with her fingertip and gave out a small sigh.

".....Fuun, I see. The reason why nobody was guarding the transportation I was in back then was because of you, Tokisaki Kurumi."

Nia called out her name with a strong accent as if she was trying to threaten the girl.

However the girl-----Kurumi, she doesn't seemed to be scared of Nia's actions. Instead, she showed a fierce grin.

"How splendid. So that is the omniscient angel <Rasiel>?"

Upon hearing Kurumi's words, Nia moved her body out of shock.

".....Hee. So you've already investigated about me beforehand?"

"Yes. Of course, although I have to rely on [Numbers] to get everything since I don't have the same level of investigation ability like you."

Kurumi laughed in amusement.

[Numbers]. Because Nia was curious about what she had just said, Nia touched <Rasiel> for a second time. At the moment, the meaning behind Kurumi's words echoed inside her head.

".....I see, clones, huh? Again, there's another troublesome power that exists."

While saying this, Nia let out a drop of sweat from her forehead.

Nia claimed this according to <Rasiel>'s written information about Kurumi's angel <Emperor of Time-Zafkiel>. She never knew that this kind of powerful ability existed before.

Nia gazed at Kurumi, she's screaming inside her mind. -----What's with an angel that could manipulate time? Isn't that cheating.....!?

Although <Rasiel> could be used for dangerous situations, if Nia should fight one by one with Kurumi, perhaps Nia will have no chance at winning.

However, feeling insecure is surely a bad move. Though Kurumi's ability to collect information through creating clones is terrifying, there's no way that she could grasp information about all of <Rasiel>'s abilities.

And in turn, Nia already knew all about Kurumi's abilities, and Kurumi should also understand about that as well. Opposing a mysterious spirit, she's surely is not an ordinary one.

But Nia still had the advantage due to information she has for a battle. Nia thought she's a step ahead and is confident of that. After judging, Nia gave out a sigh and relaxed her stiffened body a little bit.

"Then, what kind of business does the worst Spirit-sama have with me?"

After Nia asked, Kurumi giggles again.

"-----I have a very simple request, I want you to investigate something."

And then Nia raised her hand slowly and touched <Rasiel>.

"There's something I want you to investigate with your <Rasiel>."

".....Something you want me to investigate, huh?"

Nia placed her hand on her chin.

"Well, to show my gratitude for helping me, I want to listen to your request, but that depends on the degree.....I think. Unlike you, I'm a pacifist. I won't leak out any important information that will become dangerous later."

Upon hearing Nia's words, Kurumi gave out a small laugh.

"Please be assured. This is truly only for my own personal desires. I promise that the information won't be the cause for any war or become the reason for any person's unhappiness."

".....Fuun?"

Nia pointed her gaze to Kurumi.

As if to trying to respond, Kurumi moved her lips.

"That's why, please tell me. ---30 years ago, [The First Spirit] that appeared in this world. The cause and reason for its appearance, the accurate coordinates and time of when it appeared, its powers, as well as-----a way to kill it."

".....Eh?"

Upon hearing Kurumi, Nia knitted her eyebrow.



## Part 7

“-----Then, this room. Please come in.”

After saying this, Kotori opened the door using a key and urged Shidou and the others to come in.

It's a room inside the first floor of the high mansion next to Itsuka residence where all spirits reside. Shidou looked back at all the spirits who are behind him, and then he held the door's knob and turned it.

Then they take off their shoes as they enter the room, they their eyes glimmer with shock upon looking at the room's appearance.

“This is.....”

Some large working desks are lined up inside the 20 tatami space. On the top of them, various painting tools have been prepared<sup>3</sup>

This room looks like a larger version of Nia's work room. But at the same time, the room has some differences with Nia's. All the desk and painting tools are all new brand, seemingly as if they had never been used before.

The previous meeting happened about an hour ago. At that time, <Ratatoskr> had been preparing the working room.....As usual, they're an amazing organization.

“Ooh~! This is.....Amazing~”

“Looks like a pro's.....”

“Kaka!Hou, isn't this an appropriate place for us Yamai to show off our skill?”

The Spirits came into the room after Shidou. They raise their admiration towards the room's interior and equipment.

Upon looking at everyone's reaction, Shidou turns his glance towards Kotori.

“.....You even created this kind of room.....So you're really serious.”

“Really-really, totally serious. -----Or frankly speaking, there's no other way, right?”

“Well, that might be true though.....”

Shidou scratched his cheeks while saying this. Kotori folded her arms while walking towards the center of the room. She turned her body to everyone's direction.

And then, she raised her voice loudly.

“Alright, everyone. The target is two days from now. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, during Comic Colosseum's last day, Nia's circle will participate on that day.”

Kotori spread both of her hands, and then she lets out a voice with a tone that is similar to an opera performance.

“-----On that day, we will create our booth next to Nia’s space. We will create our doujin with the same number of copies as Nia’s, and then we will sell them faster than Nia.”

Upon hearing Kotori’s words, all spirits raised their voices “Ooh.....!”

Right. This is what Kotori said earlier when she said “Thinking”. From Shidou’s information, Kotori knew that Nia is going to participate with her doujin at end of the month. If they focus on that point together, then the plan is to knock Nia down with one blow with everyone’s help.

“The problem is that we don’t have much time. Though the background and finishing touches will be down by our support from <Ratatoskr>, the rest are all our responsibility, [The book’s we created] won’t be a lie then. The story and main character’s drawings should be done by us. I’ve already prepared the printing equipment; the worst case is that we have to finish the manuscript on the 31<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 a.m.”

“But.....Are you sure this will work? The opponent is a pro manga artist, you know?”

“Well, it’s not like I’m thinking that it’ll be simple too. But, if we aren’t able to match her on a commercial basis, then we wouldn’t be able to win right? Because its doujin, the number of books we could take to the event assembly is limited, that’s the only way we can fight her. -----Besides, because its doujin, it’ll be alright even if the pages number isn’t that much.”

“That’s true.....Then, let’s say we can sell the books faster than Nia, but how can we make her admit her defeat.....?”

“That’s, probably depends on how we negotiate with her during the progress and her own self-pride. But, since our goal is to [Make her read our created book], then I think we still have plenty of hope.”

“.....Then, the problem is-“

Shidou asked with a serious facial expression, and Kotori replied back to him by nodding.

“Yes. How can we create a doujin that will be able to strike Nia’s heart? -----Also, how can we sell faster than her?”

After Kotori said that, she started walking to the white board inside the room while fluttering the jacket hanging on her shoulders. She stood up in front of the board.

“-----Then that’s it, first let’s decide on the role. The story will be create together by everyone.....The problem is the drawing. I want to ask a question. Is there anyone here who has ever drawn a manga or illustration among us?”

Kotori asks while looking at all the Spirits, and then several people raise their hands. They’re Kaguya, Yuzuru, and the ex-humans Origami and Miku.

“Well, that’s what I guess.....Well, from the start, let’s see everyone’s drawing skill. Everyone, please sit on any desk you like. Let’s start by drawing a picture of Shidou.”

“Ooh~! Drawing Shido. Leave it to me!”

“Fufun, well fine. You better watch my art skill!”

“Consent. Shidou, please sit down over there.”

“Darling, please look here, look here~!”

“.....”

After all of the spirits sat down on their chosen chairs, they begin to move their pencils on the paper available on the desk. And then, Kotori knitted her eyebrow as if she remembered something.

“Ah, right. Shidou, please draw something too.”

“Me too!?”

“Yes. Back then, you drew various characters on your note book, right? If I remember correctly—“

“A---h!Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Shidou screamed as if trying to cover Kotori’s voice. The Spirits are all surprised and turn to look at Shidou.

“W-What’s wrong, Shidou? Suddenly screaming like that?”

“I-I was so.....surprised.”

“.....Well, that’s it, let’s leave him alone.”

Somehow Natsumi seemingly understands his state and placed her hand on Yoshino’s shoulder. Yoshino turns to her while wondering a little.

“Then, let’s hurry; let’s hurry, because I will be drawing as well.”

“Ku.....”

Kotori moved the chupa-chups stick to urge him to hurry. If he continues opposing her, probably she will mention too much unnecessary things. Shidou swallowed his regret; he took an identical-looking note book with Tohka and the others and started drawing a picture on the paper.

-----And then, 30 minutes have passed. Everyone had already finished their pictures.

“Well, let’s see everyone’s picture one by one.”

“Ooh! Please see!”

“I.....Already finish too.”

Responding to Kotori’s words, both Tohka and Yoshino showed their pictures to everyone.

Their pictures are all really cute.....However, these look like an elementary kid's drawing.

"I see.....Uh, they're cute."

"Really?"

"Yes. But, we cannot use it for the doujin this time."

"I-I'm sorry....."

Yoshino shrugged her shoulders in apologetic manner. Shidou made a wry smile and pats her head gently.

"Well, next. By the way, this is mine."

"Ah~, then I'll show mine too~! Here!"

Kotori and Miku showed their pictures.

Their picture level is above Tohka and Yoshino in term of age-range. However, rather than looking like a manga drawing, they look more like pictures drawn by middle or high school girls on their notebooks. However, the characters' appearance still looks quite lovely.

However, there's one thing pulling Shidou's attention. Everyone should be drawing a picture of Shidou, then why does Miku's illustration show Shidou with long hair and wearing skirt.

".....Uhm, Miku?"

"Yes~, what is it, darling?"

".....No, it's nothing. Anyway, let's go to the next one."

When Miku turned to him with sparkling eyes, Shidou can sense something dangerous in her mind and averted his gaze away from her. If he were to continue commenting on it, he has feeling that the person in reality will be forced to match with her illustration.

"Kukuku.....Then next one will be us!"

"Presentation. Please look."

Yamai sisters said that with a tone full of confidence as they showed their pictures.

"Ooh!?"

As Shidou looked at their pictures, he widened his eyes. As expected from those two who had an illustration contest. Kaguya and Yuzuru's drawing quality is on different level from the previous four people.

Of course, there are some points still poorly drawn, but these pictures can still be used for a manga.

By the way, Kaguya's drawing of Shidou is a hot-blooded Shidou in a Shōnen manga style, while Yuzuru's drawing of Shidou is a handsome Shidou in a Shōjo manga style.

"Aren't those amazing, you two?"

"Kakaka! Obviously!"

"Consent. There's nothing we, Yamai cannot do."

Those two beam their chests full of confidence. Kotori looked at the pictures while saying "Fumu" and places her hand on her chin. She then turned towards Shidou and Origami.

"For now the main artist candidate will be Yamai sisters. -----Well then, next, let's see the next one."

"Y-Yes....."

"Understood."

In response to Kotori, Shidou and Origami show their pictures. Everyone is looking at them.

"Fumu-fumu, though still incomparable with Kaguya's and Yuzuru's, Shidou's drawing isn't really bad too. Then Origami is.....Eh? Hyaa!?"



Kotori screamed upon looking at Origami's picture. However, that's was only natural. Origami's picture was drawn realistically and with dexterity, however.....Shidou's figure looks completely naked and there's Origami who is also naked, while entangling him passionately.

"Wha.....!?"

".....!?"

All spirits also choked following Kotori's reaction. However only Yuzuru and Miku loosen their cheeks and stared at the picture with shining eyes.

"W-What did you draw, Origami!?"

"Shidou becoming one with me."

"What kind of unnecessary things did you add!?"

Kotori screamed and turned down Origami's picture.

"Geez.....Since your drawing looks very good, I'll put you into the main artist candidate too, but please don't do such thing again, alright.....?"

"I can't understand. If you wanted to sell the doujin very well, then putting an adult-only element is inevitable."

"Our booth will be displayed at the [All-Ages Work] section only."

After shouting, Kotori lets out a sigh out of exhaustion.

"Anyway.....I guess that's all? Then-"

"T-That's....."

Then, before Kotori finish her words, Yoshino raised up her voice nervously.

"We still haven't taken a look at Natsumi-san's picture....."

".....! Ah, no, I....."

Upon Yoshino's words, Natsumi shrugged her shoulders and is hiding the paper behind her back.

"Aah, that's right. I'm sorry, Natsumi. Can you please show it?"

".....T-That's alright. This isn't a good picture anyway. Isn't it better to just continue with Kaguya, Yuzuru, Shidou or Origami?"

"Since you already drew it, we want to see too, come on."

".....U-Uu. Anyway, actually, since it's not very good, don't expect anything, alright?"

"It's alright. My picture isn't very good as well."

"In fact, my body condition is bad because I had a lack of sleep today. It's also been a long time since I gripped a pen....."

"I understand."

"In truth, I need ten minutes to draw because I was hesitating with the pose, it's also been a very long time since the last time I had drawn in the first place, and lastly my condition is bad due to lack of sleep—"

"Aah, I understand already, so hurry up and show it!"

Kotori raised her voice to urge Natsumi, and she snatched the paper from Natsumi's hand.

When Kotori looked at the paper-----She widened her eyes in surprised.

"Eh.....This is--"

"A-Amazing....."

"What.....did you say?"

The Spirits expressed their amazement one by one.

However, that was only natural. The level of Natsumi's drawing isn't inferior in comparison with a pro manga artist's drawing.

"Isn't this amazing, Natsumi? So you have this kind of special skill?"

".....No, rather than special skill.....Back then I was interested.....I had [Mimicked] a manga artist....."

"Ah---"

Upon hearing Natsumi's words, Shidou remembered.

Right. Natsumi has her angel <Haniel>. In the first place, she's a forgery spirit. She can transform into anything and change her own appearance into any form she likes.

And she is also able to disguise herself into another person to the extent that even their close friend wouldn't be able to find out easily. She's also shown to trace her target object's actions. She's a genius in observing and imitating.

"-----Well, it's decided."

After saying that, Kotori let out her voice.

"The main artist is Natsumi, and the support is the Yamai sisters, Shidou, and Origami."

All the Spirits nodded together in agreement.

"Umu, I agree!"

"Natsumi-san.....Amazing."



“No objection.”

“Fufufu... Well fine. This time I'll let you take the lead.”

“Agreement. I will let you be in the limelight.”

“Kya~! Natsumi-san, can you please draw a love story between me and darling after this~?”

“E.....Eh?”

Natsumi blinked at everyone's voices.

Then Shidou held Natsumi's hand.

“Please, Natsumi. Please lend your power to save Nia!”

“Ehh.....!?”

Shidou said that with a serious look, Natsumi went silent for a while.

“.....D-Don't complaint later, alright?”

Natsumi said that in embarrassment.

As if celebrating her, the sound of everyone's clapping their hands resounded inside the room. After that, Natsumi's face started to get red.

At that time, Tohka noticed something.

“By the way Kotori, what should we do?”

“Now that you mention it~. Ah! Are we going to give everyone a massage when they are tired, and sing a lullaby while sleeping together~!?”

Miku twisted her body and her eyes start to sparkle. Natsumi shuddered and made a “Hii” sound before hiding behind Shidou.

“That's not it. I have another task for everyone. ----Perhaps this mission is more important than creating the manga.”

Kotori went “Yare-Yare” and shrugged her shoulders during her reply to Tohka. After that, Miku, Tohka and Yoshino exchanged glances at each other, while inclining their heads in wonder.

“An important mission.....That's it?”

“I wonder what we're going to do~?”

“That's something to look forward to. ----More importantly, everyone, let's start thinking of a story for the doujin.”

“Nu? Aren't we going to draw Shido?”

“That’s true but, right now there’s a limitation to the pages number we should work on. Although we can get some support from <Ratatoskr>, at best, there’s a total 64 pages minus 4 pages for the front cover and the 1 page imprint. So in total, we need around 59 pages. We should fit the story within that limit in order to make Nia become fond of [Shidou]’s character.”

“Muu.....I see. It’s pretty difficult.”

Tohka folded her arms with a difficult face. Kotori walked to the white board in the middle of the room and stood up in front of it.

“That’s why, let’s us discuss about it first. We will create the Name within today, and finish the drawing within tomorrow.”

“.....Thinking about it again, that’s a totally jumbled schedule..... Do you think we’ll really finish it?”

“There’s no other choice than to finish it.”

Kotori then made a \*Kyubon\* sound, as the sound of her magic pen’s cap began to resound. She wrote [Project Doujin Shidou] on the white board.

And then, Kotori turned towards everyone’s direction and loudly declared.

“-----Well, let’s start our manuscript [Date].”

#### Translation and References (Chapter 3)

1. Ren'ai (恋愛, Japanese for falling in love) refers to dating sim visual novels
2. Ashura is a god of war that lives for fighting.
3. Tatami (畳) is a type of mat used as a flooring material in traditional Japanese-style rooms. Traditionally made using rice straw to form the core.

## Chapter 04: There's a Deadline If You Give Up

### Part 1

On the rooftop of a mansion where Nia resides, the shadows began to spread out.

From the shadows, Kurumi slowly raised herself up before coming out with a jumping move. She stretched her body lightly and slowly looked up to the sky. After that, a familiar voice resounded from the shadow that was spreading on the ground.

“-----Well, well.”

“It looks like it has become a troublesome matter.”

“How was it?”

After uttering those words, several girls came out at the same time from the mansion rooftop's shadows.

-----They're all girls with an asymmetrically fluttering hairstyle and all of them have a clock's dial as their left eye.

Of course they also have the same voice. The reason is because they're all [Kurumi]'s voice.

Kurumi's angel is <Zafkiel>. Using [The Eight's Bullet] Kurumi can create her own clones. They are all talking to Kurumi through the shadows.

Kurumi lets out a sigh and replied to them.

“Right.”

It's true that Kurumi had already meet with the Second Spirit she had been searching for this all time, and using Nia's angel, Kurumi already obtained the information regarding [The First Spirit].

However, Kurumi has reached a serious conclusion as a result.

Kurumi gave out a sigh and shrugged her shoulders.

“Even if I collect enough Reiryoku to go back to 30 years ago using [The Twelfth Bullet-Yud Bet], I absolutely cannot win against [The First Spirit].”

“.....”

After Kurumi said that, Kurumi's clones suddenly became quiet.

They were all looking at Kurumi silently.

“-----Ara?”

In response to them, Kurumi giggled and laughed.

“What's with that face, us? ----Do you think I will accept it just like that? Do you think I will waste all the human lives I took this whole time just because of that?”

After saying that, Kurumi twirled around as if she was dancing, and she kicked the ground lightly to stand at an angle.

As she looks down to the vast town, she continued to speak with a singing tone.

"The First Spirit's power might be too powerful-----but, what about it? My angel <Zafkiel> has the power to manipulate time. In front of time, any kind of power is meaningless."

Kurumi looked back at those clones.

Among the information Kurumi got from Nia, the most important one wasn't [The First Spirit]'s ability, -----Rather, it was the reason and cause for its appearance.

"It's was a very simple talk. The First Spirit didn't exist in this world until 30 years ago. In that case, I need to go to the time before the First Spirit appeared in this world, and just eliminate the cause for its appearance."

As Kurumi said that, she created a gun shape using her right hand's index finger and thumb. Then, \*Bang!\*, she shot it towards an empty space.

All clones brightened their expressions upon hearing Kurumi's words.

"----Well, it would be a lie if I said that I'm not regretting the fact that I cannot kill that hateful Spirit with my own hands. Tough, but let's put that aside."

Right. The most important thing is-----to erase the reality of that [Spirit]'s existence being born into this world.

Restore the history to how it should be, just like what Shidou did.

Kurumi lowered her eyes and gripped her fist as if she gained a new determination.

"But still....."

After that, she gave out a sigh.

From Nia just now, Kurumi already knew the reason of [The First Spirit]'s arrival. She thought about that in her mind and spoke to herself with an appalled voice.

"Isaac Ray Pelham Westcott, Ellen Mira Mathers, and Elliot Woodman."

She called out the names of the three biggest sinners.

"Although it's no use to say it now..... but the next time I see you three, I will likely be unable to control my urge to kill you."

After saying that, Kurumi kicked the ground again as she began to disappear into the ground.

## Part 2

And so, Shidou and the other's battlefield had just begun.

After the story line has been decided by everyone, Shidou and the other Spirits began splitting their work between a drawing team and a special team.

Firstly, for the drawing team, Natsumi is in charge of working on the major parts of the drawing: sketching the rough outline and drafting the cover.

Although they wanted help out more to lighten Natsumi's burden, in order to keep consistency between story and drawing-style, this task had to be entrusted to Natsumi.

While Shidou and the others are free, they viewed a video that gave a simple explanation regarding the work process for a manga. They then practiced their sketches on the paper in order to have some preparation before being able to help out with the manga.

When everything is done, the time is already 2:00 a.m. of December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Although naturally everyone should go to sleep and continue working on the drawing early next morning, Natsumi kept insisting to continue the work. They decided to work overnight and take naps in turns in order to maximize their working efficiency.

When Natsumi drew the draft, she framed her illustration by using a ruler and a pen. Then, she drew the text box. Once that was done, the real work will begin. Everyone would re-draw the rough sketch of all the characters Natsumi had drawn using pencil.

However,

".....Uwaah! I draw over the frame!"

"Ku.....The jet-black tears have fallen upon the pure holy ground!?"

"Disturbance. The ink has already stuck under the ruler."

".....No problem. This can still be repaired."

Although Shidou and the others have all drawn an illustration before, they're still amateurs. So, there's no way they could draw the manuscript neatly during the beginning.

Though with enough concentration and adaptive power, they looked at the draft's open space and moved the pen more carefully. Somehow, they managed to draw the line properly on the draft.....Well midway, Kaguya and Yuzuru had switched their pen type from the Mili-pen to the Superfine Marker for inking the small parts.

And after inking was done, they erased the pencil traces diligently. Then, they changed the image into data by using a scanner and send it to assistant-team lead by Nakatsugawa.

Though it can be said that they are rushing on the work, with only a small number of people, they won't be able to finish the manga book within only 2 days.

However, that doesn't mean that Shidou and the others can suddenly increase their drawing ability. Inking Natsumi's rough sketch using a pen is more stressful than everyone had thought it would be.

"....."

"....."

"....."

Inside the large room, there is the scratching sound of a pen moving. Even though they played some CDs as background music; while working, there's almost no effect at all to the person whose heart is supposed to be healed by the music.

-----After some time has passed since they started working.

"Hi, everyone! How's the work progress?"

Suddenly, the room's door opened. It's Kotori, who brought along some bags with both of her hands.

".....Aah, Kotori. Well, somehow."

".....Somehow, you look older even though it's just been a few hours since we last seen each other."

Kotori said that while sweating. She placed the bags on the table and raised her voice.

"Refreshments. I'll put them here, please drink them while you're taking a break."

"Kaka.....An offering, huh? What good dedication, Kotori."

"Gratitude. Thank you very much Kotori."

"....."

The Yamai sisters expressed their gratitude, Origami kept silence while waving her hand. At that time, "Uuh....." such a voice can be heard. Perhaps, Natsumi was replying to Kotori's words.

Then, since Kotori already got a response from everyone, she walked towards Shidou's desk.

".....Shidou, can I have a moment?"

"Ng? What is it?"

"It's about Nia, so--"

".....! Did something happen!?"

When Shidou asked, Kotori nodded. Then, once again, she raised her voice to everyone.

"Sorry, everyone. I'll be borrowing Shidou for a while. He'll work twice as faster once he gets back."

“Hey!?”

Shidou voiced his protest, but Kotori didn't take notice. She gripped Shidou's sleeve and pulled him forward.

“H-Hey.....”

Shidou, while being dragged by Kotori, was walking out of the room like a dog being lead.

After they had left the mansion, Shidou lowered his eyesight due to the dazzling sunshine.

“Ukh.....It's already this bright? This is bad, how many hours are left?”

“Although manuscript is also important, but first just get into the car.”

After saying that, Kotori pointed to a car parked in front of the mansion.

Shidou sat on the back seat as per Kotori's instruction. The car left right away, moving along the road.

“Then.....”

Shidou looked to the stores and houses on the street outside the window as he asked Kotori.

“Did you find out something about Nia?”

“Yes-----Actually, we have contacted someone who is Nia's mangaka acquaintance.”

“I-Is that true? Then, if we ask that person—“

“Yes. We might be able to find out something regarding Nia's past.”

Kotori said that while looking at Shidou. Shidou gulped down his saliva.

After twenty minutes had passed, the car carrying Shidou and Kotori stopped right before a café.

“-----It's here. Please get off. Reine is already talking to that person.”

“A-Aah.”

Shidou got out from the car. While a little nervous, he proceeded towards the café.

They looked around inside the café-----Then they heard someone who was calling out for Shidou while raising her hand a little.

“Hi, Reine-san.”

“I'm sorry to keep you waiting.”

“.....Aah, so you’ve arrived, Shin, Kotori.”

Reine talked to with a similar sleepy tone. She was similar to Shidou who was currently also sleepy due to last night. Then, she introduced them to the person who sitting in front of them.

“.....Let me introduce. She’s a manga artist. Her name is Takajou Hiroki.”

“Ah, nice to meet you—“

Shidou bowed to her, -----but at that point, he stopped his body’s movement.

He thought that Takajou Hiroki was the name for a guy. However, in front of him, there was a woman wearing thick glasses and her age looked seemingly over twenty.

Then, he remembered something regarding another week’s event. Nia herself said there’s another female manga artist who used a masculine name as a pen name like her.

“Please let me introduce myself. My name is Itsuka Shidou.”

“The same, my name is Kotori. Thank you very much for coming here today.”

“Ooh, thank you for your politeness.”

In response to Shidou and Kotori’s greeting, Takajou said that while placing her hands on the table as she bowed in return to them.

And then, she looked up to see both Shidou and Kotori.

“.....Well then, today you wanted to ask something about Honjou-sensei, right?”

“Ah-----Yes. That’s right. Anything is fine; can you please tell us everything you know?”

When Shidou asked that, Takajou corrected the position of her glasses and her lens started shining.

“Although I don’t mind about it.....What kind of relationship do you all have with Honjou-sensei?”

“Eh?”

“No, please pardon me. But our careers are in the peak of our popularity. I won’t leak out any information to any unrelated person.”

“I see.....”

Perhaps this conversation won’t last any longer. However, Shidou could not think of any good explanation right away. He kept thinking about what to do for a moment.

And then from his side, Kotori raised up her voice.

“-----Actually Nia-Onee-chan is our distant relative, but we couldn’t contact her for several years now.....So we’re wandering around asking various people about her circumstances.”



And then, Kotori said those words very carefully. Perhaps she had already assumed this kind of circumstance beforehand? Or it's was only an ad-lib she came up on the spot? No matter which one, Kotori said that plausibly without changing her expression. Shidou had a feeling that Kotori had a nature talent as a swindler.

"Fumu, I see."

Takajou groaned a little before nodding. Certainly, Takajou believed in Kotori because she just used her real name [Nia], which has never been present to public.

"I understand your circumstances. I'm also worried about Honjou-sensei. I will cooperate with you as long as it's within my limits."

"Is that true? Thank you very much.....!"

Shidou placed his hands before him, and bended his body to once again bow to her.

However-----Takajou scratched her cheeks a little.

"However.....I don't know how helpful I can be."

"What do you mean.....?"

"No, actually, I haven't met with Honjou-sensei during the recent years as well. Besides.....Somehow it's looks like that Honjou-sensei also hates me."

"Eh? What do you mean?"

As Shidou asked, Takajou shook her head as she continued.

"No.....About 8 or 9 years ago, we had met during a publisher's party and became friends.....But one day, she strangely became cold towards me and started keeping her distance.....I thought, we had a good friendship as fellow manga artists, but.....It looks like my carelessness did something rude to her without my realization."

"That's....."

Upon hearing that explanation, Shidou knitted his eyebrow. Next to him, Kotori also created the same expression as if realizing something.

Perhaps what's come up in Kotori's mind was also -----the angel <Rasiel>'s existence.

"What's wrong?"

Feeling that Shidou and Kotori's reactions were strange, Takajou inclined her head.

"N-No, nothing wrong."

"Fumu.....Is that so? -----Anyhow, that's it. Although I can tell you what I know, I'm not sure if that will be useful or not."

"Yes, please do."

Shidou said that while nodding, Takajou returned the reply back by shaking her head as well. Then, she continued.

-----Approximately 40 minutes later,

Shidou and Kotori thanked Takajou and left the café. They went back to the same car that brought them here previously. As the car moved, they stared outside to look at the outside window's scenery.

From their conversation with Takajou, Nia has a good personality which makes her always friendly and talkative towards anyone.

However, Nia doesn't like to talk about herself before she became a manga artist. Especially, when questioned about her past relationships with her friends. She always tries to smooth talk her way out of those conversations.

And even when someone like Takajou appeared, who seemed easy to get along well, she kept her distant with her in turn.

".....What do you think Kotori?"

"Seemingly-----"

In response to Shidou, Kotori moved her lips.

"There's no doubt that it has something to do with <Rasiel>'s existence.....If you think about it carefully, it's not strange. If you have an angel that could know everything in this world, everyone would want investigate the people around them, right?"

"Even.....Still."

"Yes. Perhaps, that was the reason why Nia distrusted humans. ----But that's it. There's no human who could behave like a saint every day and night. Everyone will eventually at least talk bad behind someone's back. With <Rasiel>, it's only natural to feel disgusted towards human beings."

Kotori scratched her head.

".....The root of the problem is surprisingly deep. When I heard that she can only love 2D characters, I thought it was only some kind of joke, but.....In short, she won't open her heart so nobody will be able to betray her, right? Isn't this.....really sad?"

"....."

Upon hearing Kotori's words, Shidou kept silent for a while.

Perhaps what Kotori said is true. Perhaps it was because of this reason. The reason why she never talked about her past relationship with her friends....the reason why she absorbed herself into a 2D world.

However, there's only one thing that felt odd. About Nia, who suddenly acted coldly and kept her distant with Takajou.....Those thoughts remained stuck inside Shidou's mind.

“....., Shidou?”

“Eh? Aah.....”

Shidou replied her, as Kotori looked at him with a displeased face.

“I understand that you are sleepy because you worked overnight, but this is important matter. You can't be spaced-out.”

“Aah.....Sorry.”

Shidou responded back with a short reply. Upon seeing Nia's rough life, he gripped his fist.

“Anyhow, for now, let's complete the doujin. No matter what we do, we should make a place where we can talk to Nia once again and negotiate with her.”

When Shidou said that, Kotori made a surprised expression as she nodded back to him.

### **Part 3**

-----The work had reached its climax on December 31<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 a.m.

Inside the work room on the first floor of Spirit's mansion, Shidou and the others were still busy using pens to ink the empty space of the manuscript.

“.....”

Inside the silence, Shidou moved his body towards the desk as if he was sticking to it. Then, he inked the rough character drawn by Natsumi very carefully.

He was wearing gloves with fingertip attachments in order to not get cut off and taint the manuscript. He also stuck a cooling sheet on his forehead to prevent him from falling asleep.

Empty coffee cans and nutritional drink bottles lined up on the edge of the table.

“.....1:00 a.m.....Although we should send the data for the finishing touches.....We are almost at our time limit.....You know?”

“.....Ui~.....”

“Ans.....wer. Over here, only a little bit more.....”

“.....”

It's been a day since they started working. Shidou never left his seat except for food, bathroom breaks, and a momentary nap. He continued working on the drawing. It has exhausted his mind more than he expected. When he goes to the bathroom just now, looking at his face reflected on the mirror, his eyes are surrounded by splendid black circle around them, just like Reine's.

However, Shidou is not the only one who has fallen into that state. On Shidou's left side, both Kaguya and Yuzuru are in the same boat as Shidou. Their head seemed to feel dizzy as well. The only one who was still calm is Origami, but sometimes she also stopped moving every few hours as if she's run out of battery.

However, Natsumi was the one who was, without a doubt, in the most dangerous state right.

Natsumi sat on the desk in the back side of the room. She didn't take a nap even once. Her eyes looked really red, and her fingertips were trembling. However, no matter how much Shidou and the others asked her to rest, Natsumi never once stopped drawing. With that tenacity, the girl has been granted with a pro's greatness.

Looking at that girl's figure, Shidou cannot let out any complaints at all. Shidou collected all of his last willpower and placed them into his fingertips. Slowly, he started working on the last part.

"Alright.....This is.....The end, the finish....."

Shidou said that with a shivering voice; then, he collapsed onto the desk. ---Of course, after he putting aside the manuscript.

At almost the same time, the Yamai sisters and Origami also finished their work. Similar to Shidou, both Kaguya and Yuzuru also collapsed onto their desks. However, Origami stretched her body and then stopped moving for a while.

Then, while waiting for the ink to dry, they erased the pencil traces and gave the manuscript to the assistant team.

"Well, it'll be alright to entrust everything else to <Ratatoskr> then."

Not so long after that, the door of the work room opened. Kotori and the others from the other team came inside with a big cardboard box.

".....Hi, Shidou."

"Aah, Kotori.....Eh?"

As Shidou replied back to Kotori and the others, he struggled to raise his tired eyes.

Anyhow, Kotori, Tohka, Yoshino, and Miku appear to have the same sleepy face as Shidou and the rest.

"You all.....That face, what happened?"

When Shidou asked, the girls looked at each other before turning back to Shidou.

"That's a secret, Shido."

"Please.....Look forward to it."

"Ufufu.....Actually, lack of sleep is beauty's most powerful enemy, but we cannot just let darling and the others do all the work~."

After saying that, Tohka, Yoshino and Miku laughed despite having a worn out face. Shidou inclined his head in wonder.

“More importantly, how was your work?”

“Aah.....I just finish them just now. After we are done with the erasing part and scanning them, we'll send them to the assistant team. I think Kaguya, Yuzuru, and Origami have also already finished.”

“Is that so? Thank you, Well then----“

After saying those words, Kotori looked around at the room's scenery.

Right. There's a girl who was still continuing to work inside the room, ----Natsumi.

Shidou piled up the papers for a few seconds and slowly got up from the chair. He walked towards Natsumi along with Kotori and the others.

Upon seeing that, both the Yamai sisters and Origami followed them as they walked towards Natsumi.

“Natsumi.....Are you alright?”

“.....”

“Natsumi?”

“.....! A-Aah.....Un.....”

When Shidou talked to her, Natsumi shrugged her shoulders. The color of fatigue can be seen clearly on her face. Under her red eyes, there were dark circles around them. Looking like that, Natsumi had already reached her limits.

“Since we already finished our work, we will take over for you. You're exhausted, right? Please go get some rest.”

“.....Uun, that's fine. It's only a little bit more.....”

Natsumi shook her head in response to Shidou's words and continued working. She rubbed her eyes because they seemed to be growing dizzier. She accidentally covered her face with the ink stuck on her hands. Somehow, her face looked like someone who defeated at a Japanese badminton match.

“Wait a minute.....Natsumi, didn't you not take any breaks since yesterday? Moreover, you even do the double the amount of work on both the Name and the draft.....”

“That's right. Our game will be at the sales event. Leave the rest to us, the dark dimension of sleep is already calling out to you.”

“Agreement. You are overworking yourself, Natsumi.”

“Resting is also important work.”

-----However, even though Yamai sisters and Origami were trying to talk to her together, Natsumi didn't stop her work at all.

Staring at the blank space of the manuscript, Natsumi inked them with the pen wholeheartedly.



".....I said.....It's fine."

"B-But....."

While Shidou said that, Natsumi keeps drawing a beautiful line with trembling fingers.

".....Perhaps, I will be the only one who is useless during the event. This is the only thing I can do.....Is only this far.....That's why, let me do this. For me to become someone this necessary is something unthinkable. Because I want to be helpful too for everyone....."

"Natsumi....."

".....I was saved by Shidou and everyone, I was truly happy.....Because of that, this time, I wanted to save another Spirit by combining our power together. I'm, really.....really.....happy. That's why, there's no pain at all. It's really-really fun that I can't help it. I want to tell her soon.....So that stubborn Nia will understand about it too."

Natsumi smiled a little, before she slowly lifted up her hand that was gripping the pen.

"-----That friendship is a beautiful.....thing."

And then, Natsumi collapsed and fell off from her chair just as she finished her drawing. Thankfully, Shidou was able to catch her body with one arm.

"Hey, Natsumi, are you alright?"

"....."

Shidou asked with a worried tone. Natsumi replied with a soft breathing that indicated that she fell asleep.

".....You've work hard Natsumi."

After saying that, Shidou smiled at her and gently patted her head.

And then, Miku, who stood up behind him, raised her voice with a tears flowing down from her eyes.

"Uu.....I'm being deeply moved! To show my concern, darling, let me bring Natsumi-san to her room and lay her down on the bed....."

"Shidou, bring Natsumi to her room. Don't forget to lock the door, alright?"

As if interrupting Miku's words, Kotori said that. Miku went, "Aan, Kotori-san is such a meanie!" and twisted her body.

Kotori ignored Miku and took the finished manuscript from Natsumi's table. She stares at it before nodding a little.

"-----How splendid."

After that, she showed it to everyone present.



“This is the result of Natsumi’s soul. With this, our weapon is already completed. -----  
Everyone, this match, we’ll absolutely gain victory!”

Upon hearing Kotori’s words,

“Ooh!”

Shidou and the others tossed their fist into the air as their answer.

## **Part 4**

Finally the morning has arrived. It’s already 7:30 a.m. The door of the battlefield has opened.

The circle of participants have already line up at a large convention center-----Tengu Square, where Comico Colosseum’s assembly was being held. As they enter the hall, they heard the sound of footsteps, as well as rolling carts from the inside the room.

Comico Colosseum was held twice a year, once during the summer and once during the winter. They displayed and sold a large number of doujin. It was scheduled to be held for only three days. This was a large event where all fans of manga and anime from the whole country gathered. Just like every other year, within those three days, it can be said that more than 50 people come as vendors.

That is the biggest event ever being held. Of course there are general participants too; however, the numbers of circle participants who display their doujin have fairly increased in terms of number. Not so long after the hall opened, the rumble of people marching vibrated inside the building.

-----It’s been one hour since the opening. The group of circle participants was usually placed in the same spot. Shidou and the others, the circle <Ratatoskr>, finally built their booth in front of the gate after the pedestrian traffic became fewer.

“Alright, let’s go, everyone!”

“Umu, preparation is completed!”

“L-Let’s do our best.....!”

The Spirits nodded at Shidou’s words.

Even though it can be said that everyone’s physical condition isn’t perfect yet, they have recover enough of their physical strength because they passed out asleep after finishing the manuscript.

When Shidou woke up, he found Origami clinging next to him. While Miku had seized both Yoshino and Kotori in her left and right arms. As a result, she slept with a happy-looking face. Yoshino and Kotori groaned as if they were having a nightmare. They suspected Origami and Miku for plotting together for this, but the two denied that and said that it was only their sleeping posture. However, <Ratatoskr> knew that they lied and looked at them with suspicion.

Anyhow, today is the time for the decisive battle. Shidou walked along with the Spirits to the wide lobby passage. Then, they went to the east hall to their booth’s direction.

Inside the hall, there was a large number of people from each circle participating. Everyone seems to be busy. As they were constructing their booth, they set up the tablecloth and lined up all the books on the tables.

“Hee.....Although this is my first time coming here, this is amazing.”

“Consent. Everything here is so creative.”

“You’re right~. This atmosphere somehow feels similar to a live TV show.”

The Spirits looked at their surroundings out of interest, they went \*Kya-Kya!\* and chatted around.

Then, as she looked at a certain spot in the hall, Kotori shouted something to everyone.

“-----She’s already here, Nia.”

After her words, everyone became nervous.

Shidou gulped down his saliva and looked at the circle’s booth at the opposite direction.

Over there, was the person who Kotori just mentioned -----The figure of the Spirit, Nia.

“.....”

Shidou made up his mind and walked forward.

And then, as if noticing Shidou and the others’ presence, Nia tucked her face.

“.....Um?”

After saying that, she lifted up the bridge of her glasses and stood up from the chair.

“What an unexpected meeting boy. I’d never guess that we would meet again in a place like this. Oh, I see that everyone’s here too. Nice to meet you all, I guess?”

Nia glanced towards the Spirits sitting in a row behind Shidou. Tohka, Origami, Kaguya, and Natsumi put on their guards. Yoshino and Yuzuru bowed a little, while Kotori folded her hands and glanced back to Nia as a finishing blow.

Only Miku placed her hand on her chin and her eyes seemed to sparkle, “I see, I see.....A girl with glasses and is slender but also considerably beautiful.....The type I’ve never seen up until now~.”

For some reason, after she had said that, Natsumi took some distance from Miku.

“.....Then? Why did you come? Well, it’s your liberty to come to Comico, but.....General participants will start coming in on 10:00 a.m., you know?”

Nia shrugged her shoulders in response.

Kotori unfolded her hands while replying back to Nia.

"Thank you for the advice. -----However, we're not general participants."

Then she slowly lifted up her right hand and pointed to the space next to Nia's. Nia followed Kotori's fingertips and created a puzzled face.

"Fuun.....? Aah, I see."

Nia let out a small sigh, and then she took the hall's guide map placed on the desk.

"I thought it was odd. According to the map, there's no booth here, but then I see it's here when I come. I thought that the management's side perhaps made a mistake, but.....I see this is your doing."

"Well.....That's it."

As Shidou answered her, Nia made unpleasant expression towards Shidou and the others. However, facial expression showed that she thought that this unexpected situation was amusing.

".....Anyhow, you brought a lot of people."

"Ara, aren't your people also quite many?"

"Aah, everyone is working part-time. Isn't an employment relationship good? They'll be working as much as the money you paid to them, so it's easy to understand."

Upon hearing Nia's words, Shidou and Kotori bite their lips a little. -----Form yesterday's conversation, Takajou's words were ringing inside their minds.

"Then? It's alright if you participate, but what are you selling? You looked like you're empty-handed though."

"Yes."

Then, Kotori snapped her fingers.

As if responding to it, three men came out from worker's room. They rolled down a car that was fully loaded with cardboard boxes.

-----Looking at them carefully, they're <Fraxinus> crew members Nakatsugawa, Kawagoe and Migimoto.

"-----We're delivering circle <Ratatoskr>'s items!"

"Thank you. Please pile them up in that booth."

"Yes!"

After the answer, they piled up the cardboard boxes inside the circle's booth. There're ten boxes of them. That's right; it's the same number of boxes that Nia has piled up behind her booth.

"500 volumes inside each 10 boxes.....It's the same number as yours, right, Nia?"

“.....Hee? You’re well prepared, huh? Then, you’ll sell them faster than me.....That is what you wanted to say, right? You sure thought well about it. Nevertheless, it can be said that you have a better sales perspective than me.”

“Thanks for the quick understanding.”

At Nia’s words, Kotori lifted up the tips of her lips.

Then, accordingly, all participants who constructed their booth around them began to whisper something.

Nia, Shidou, and the others all felt a dangerous atmosphere, but-----They’re wrong. Somehow their eyes were focused towards Nakatsugawa, who was still working.

“Hey, perhaps he.....”

“Aah, that man with glasses and gloves, no doubt. The representative of legendary circle <Mai MaiKaburi>, MUNECHIKA.....!”

“No way! Five years ago, because of difference of opinion on [Should My Lispy Young Little Sister Call Me Onii-tan or Onii-tama?] the circle being split-up. That man who erased his existence from Comico.....!”

As gossip can be heard, Shidou and Kotori looked at Nakatsugawa with half-opened eyes.

“.....<Mai MaiKaburi>?”

“MUNECHIKA.....?”

Then, Nakatsugawa let out a sigh while giving a nihilistic smile.

“Please stop it. That’s a story in the past.”

“.....”

Shidou and Kotori exchanged their glances.....They had a feeling that if they asking more than this, it’ll become a troublesome conversation. As they made eye contact, both mutually agreed to change the conversation topic.

“More importantly Shidou.”

“A-Aah.”

Shidou walked to the back side of the circle’s booth. He opened one cardboard box and took out all books inside it. Perhaps, it was because they had just been printed, but the books were still slightly warm.

“Uwah.....”

Come to think of it, this was the first time he has ever seen a finished product. The illustration drawn by Natsumi was colored beautifully with a title logo printed on it. No matter how you looked at it, it doesn’t looks like a book that had been created in only two days.

Shidou walked towards Nia's direction. He gazed at her, while she's stretching out her body to adjust the position of the book from her seat.

"-----Hello, nice to meet you. I'm Itsuka Shidou from circle <Ratatoskr>."

".....!"

Nia shrugged her shoulder at Shidou's words.

After hesitating for a few seconds, Nia took a copy of one of the books lined up in her own booth and gave it to Shidou.

"Honjou Souji from circle <Honjou-Dou>.Nice to meet you too."

And then, the two of them bowed lightly as they exchange each other's book. Right. It was a custom to exchange books with the booth next to your own.

Nia made an unpleasant face.

".....Since I don't think I'll lose in this place, I'll accept this for now, but whether I'll read this or not is dependent on today's result."

"Sure. I don't mind. — Let's make today a good day for the both of us."

"....."

Shidou stretched out his hand to Nia. She let out a sigh and as she reached out her own hand. They shook hands for a while before separating.

"Even though your plan looks interesting, I don't think you have any chance to win. At the very least, I'm a pro, and even with these 5000 copies, I'm already being modest about the number since this is my first event in a while. It's not easy for a new circle like you to win with a rushed work made by amateur."

"Well.....I wonder about that."

Kotori smiled fearlessly, then-----She looked towards the Spirits behind her.

"-----Everyone, please prepare yourselves."

In response to her, Tohka, Yoshino and Miku replied with a simultaneous "Ooh~!".

On the other hand, the Yamai-sisters, Origami and Natsumi, the 4 people from the drawing group did not understand what Kotori was talking about. They inclined their head in wonder as they sat in their chairs.

"Preparation.....? What is this all about?"

"Question. Yuzuru and the others didn't hear anything about it."

".....Somehow I have a bad feeling about this."

"It's alright, it's alright. More importantly, everyone should come over here. -----  
Shidou, since we'll be right back, can you prepare the booth with Kawagoe and the others until then?"

Kotori said that while pushing Natsumi's back. Shidou nodded at her even though he's still has that question in mind.

"Alright.....Then, let's start the construction over here as well."

Shidou said that while seeing Kotori and the others off. The crew nodded towards him as they brought another big cardboard box from outside.

From the box, they took out some decoration goods for the booth: the poster of the books' front cover and tablecloth.

"Uwah, it's amazing. You even created these things too?"

"Fufufu, well obviously. Anyhow, we're a nameless circle. At the very least, we have to stand out. It's a good thing that this place is a popular wall booth. In that case, let's create an effective wall with our hands."

Nakatsugawa's glasses shined brightly. Shidou made a dry smile while sweating.

Next, Shidou helped the others to stand up the poster which has the book's front cover on it.....Although it's feel extremely embarrassing to have a poster that was painted with character whose appearance was similar to him, but now isn't the time for that. He swung his head and continued the construction.

As such works continued for a little while, Shidou noticed that some people began to gather around the wall booth. Soon those people began to line up in front of the circle booths. Especially Nia's circle, they had quite a number of people lining up in front of their booth.

"Eh.....? The opening hasn't started yet? Those people are....."

As Shidou asked, Nakatsugawa, who was still lining up the books, answered to him.

"Aah, they are the same as us, they're also circle participants. As long as they hold the circle's ticket, they can get into the hall before the general participants and they can line up in front of their favorite circle earlier than usual."

"Eh? Is it alright?"

"Uhm.....It's difficult for me to say."

Nakatsugawa gave a vague reply while folding his hands. From his expression, it looks like he's saying "Though it's not good for me to say this, but I also did the same thing in the past....."

"Eh.....But, then that means—"

"Right. Finally you understand."

Nia, who stood up in the next booth, answered Shidou.

"The success factor of the doujin depends on your reputation beforehand. Of course, I'm also blank too, since right now I'm an urgent participant. I didn't get printed on the

catalogue, but I post a notification on my blog a while ago. There are so many participants who want to be the first one to get my book, you know?”

After saying that, she threw a glance towards Shidou from above her glasses frame.

“I feel sorry about it, but even if you have the same number of copies, the winner of who can sell faster has already been decided since the beginning.”

“Wha!? No way.....”

“-----I’m not sure about that.”

At that moment, interrupting Shidou’s words, Kotori raised up her voice.

“Kotori? E.....Eeh!?”

Looking at the direction of the voice, Shidou broaden his eyes in surprised.

However, that was only natural. That’s because over there, the Spirits appeared with a cute bunny-girl costume wrapping their bodies.

“Y-You all, that appearance.....”

“Umu! It seems we’ve become the salesgirls!”

“Yesterday.....Everyone, made these.....! Although this feels a little bit embarrassing.....But I’ll do my best.....!”

Both Tohka and Yoshino answered Shidou’s question. Indeed, Tohka and the others who weren’t part of drawing team had another job to do, and this is what they meant.

At the sudden appearance of a group beautiful girls cosplaying, all the participants surrounding them got excited.

“What’s with that circle.....? Aren’t those girls extremely cute?”

“Eh? They weren’t in catalogue, right?”

“By the way, between those two, isn’t that Izayoi Miku?”

Moreover, when someone recognized that the idol Izayoi Miku was here, they suddenly got noisy. From here and there, the sound of \*Kya~ Kya~!\* and the voice of a cellphone’s shutter resounded.

Although naturally that action isn’t a good thing to do, Miku doesn’t mind that, instead she created a pose for a girl who was holding a camera.

Looking at that, Nia placed her hand on her head in wonder.

“.....Izayoi Miku?”

“Ufufu~, so you finally realize~”

Miku puffed her chest in a prideful manner. However, Nia raised her eyebrow in a questioning manner.

“.....Sorry, I don't know you at all. Are you famous?”

“Auuuu!?”

At Nia's words, Miku staggered out of shock.

“C-Calm down, Miku. Nia has been captured by DEM until recently, so she of course she doesn't know about you as an artist.”

“Y-You're right~.....Thank you very much, darling.”

"Straighten up. It will begin soon."

Miku gave a little laugh and fixed her posture, Kotori patted her back very lightly, as if she was boosting her fighting spirit.

Meanwhile, the hands of time indicated that it was 10:00 a.m., the announcement rang throughout the inside of the hall.

“-----Starting from now, Comico Colosseum has opened.”

At the same time, the sound of applause resounded heavily just like the sound of thunder.

Shidou and the spirits raised their eyes in shock upon seeing the intense applause. They turn their attention towards their neighbor.

However, this was only the beginning. Before the sound of applause was about to stop, from the distance....“Gogogogogogogo.....a rumbling sound shook the ground a little.

“T-This sound is.....”

Shidou let out a trembling voice, -----But then, he realized it right away.

That sound is coming from the large number of general participants, whose footsteps were running inside.

“O-Ooh.....!?”

“.....Amazing, what's that?”

From the way they were coming in, the people rushed inside like a tidal wave. That scenery was just like soldiers who charged into the enemy's camp after the castle's gates were opened. The Spirits were dumbfounded for a while as they looked to each other in amazement.

However, they cannot just go and be astonished like that. When the general participants came in, all the circle participants lined up behind of Nia's booth began to sell her books one by one.

“One copy of new book, please.”

“Yes, it's 500 Yen.”



“Over here, two copies please!”

“It’s 1000 Yen.”

With an experienced manner, Nia and her staffs serviced each guest. Nia looked at Shidou and twisted her lips as if saying, “Just try to see if you can win.”

“Ku-----We too, let’s begin!”

“That’s right. Well then everyone, let’s do as we planned!”

“Ooh!”

Following Kotori’s instructions, the Spirits made a row around the booth. As if attracted to their appearances, all the participants who were going to buy other books stopped their feet in front of Shidou’s booth.

“Ooh, welcome!”



Tohka called out to a boy who was looking at the front cover while passing by. The boy shrugged his shoulders as if surprised by that.

“No, uhm.....”

“One copy is 500 Yen! How about it?”

“.....Ah.... then one copy please.”

Although the boy seems to be hesitating whether to buy the book or not, but he cannot beat Tohka’s shining smile in front of him. After making an awkward smile, the boy stretched out the 1000 Yen bill.

“Ooh, thank you! The change is 500 Yen!”

After Tohka gives him the book, she waved her hand with smile on her face. The boy seemed to be embarrassed, but he looks somewhat happy as he waved his hand back a little before going.

Shidou made a dry smile upon looking at that scene.

“Haha.....This is good too.....I guess?”

After Shidou said that, Nakatsugawa, who was still arranging the booth, smiled.

“Of course. Anyhow, this is sales battle. No matter what kind of good thing you draw, it’s necessary to sell as many as possible. Expansion ability and propaganda ability are important factors. Honjou-sensei must understand that point as well. -----Rather, if we don’t do this, I think it’s impossible for a nameless circle like us to sell 5000 copies of books.”

“I-I see.....”

Sweat ran down Shidou’s cheeks as he nodded. That’s right, although this is field for doujin; a marketplace is still a marketplace.

A crowd started forming around circle <Ratatoskr> because of the beautiful salesgirls. The smiling faces of the Spirits have knocked-out the participants. They began to rise in their sales amount smoothly by using this foul play-method.

Though, <Honjou-dou> next to them had already sold several more books than <Ratatoskr> did even without using that technique. As more time has passed, line in front of Nia’s circle grew in size.

“Ukh.....If this continues.....!”

The overwhelming pace was way too different. Shidou made a sullen face upon seeing Nia selling her books one by one.

And then, Kotori, who was also wearing a bunny girl cosplay, held the stick of chupa-chups and raised them upward.

“What’s with that face, Shidou? -----The match is just beginning here.”

“Eh.....?”

Shidou inclined his head upon hearing Kotori's words.

And then-----Shidou raised his eyes in surprise right away. Slowly people begun gathering in front of circle <Ratatoskr>. Furthermore, they aren't just passing by like earlier. These people were lining up to buy <Ratatoskr> books.

"T-This is....."

Shidou raised his voice in surprise, while Kotori folded her arms in proud manner.

"Fufufu, I said it, didn't I? Kaguya, Yuzuru! Go to arrange the line at the edge of the panel!"

"Kaka, acknowledge!"

"Consent. Please leave it to us."

Following Kotori's instructions, the Yamai sisters rushed to the front of the circle to arrange the line.

Shidou shrugged his shoulders in response.

Inside that line, there existed so many familiar faces here and there. -----Right. They're members of the organization <Ratatoskr>.

".....This is, isn't this called "shills"?"

Shidou asked Kotori with a voice which seemingly cannot be heard by Nia. After that, Kotori snorted and looked at him with half eyes opened.

"How rude. They're [friends] who are coming to our circle. Buying a doujin books created by an acquaintance is a general thing to do. I also asked everyone else to contact their friends as well."

"W-Well, even if that's true, though....."

Then, Shidou inclined his head. There's a certain spot which makes him worried regarding Kotori's words.

".....Everyone else too?"

Shidou mumbled as he got a bad feeling. A few moments later, a familiar voice can be heard.

"Yahoo~! Tohka-chan~, we've arrived~"

"What's with this amazing number of people~"

"Reminding me of Congo's swampy land's battle~"

After saying those words, three girls came to the front of the booth after lining up.

Looking at those figures, Shidou chocked. Anyhow, over there are Shidou's classmates; those girls are Ai, Mai, and Mii.

“Ooh, so you three came!”

Tohka raised up her voice in a cheerful manner. And then the three of them went \*Fufu\* and loosened their lips.

“Of course. There’s no way we can refuse Tohka-chan’s request.”

“Right, right. Comico also seems to be quiet interesting too.”

“.....Well, ah! Captain-----The dangerous man has been discovered!”

“What!?”

Upon looking at Shidou’s face, the three of them went into battle mode. Shidou let out a sigh as if giving up, and then answered them.

“.....Well, you three. It’s been a while.....”

“Everyone, be careful!”

“He’s going to try to seduce girls!”

“He’ll make you pregnant if you’re careless!”

“.....”

Shidou got nervous at the riot.....As expected, he should have explained the event when he lost control of his powers during the beginning of the month. He thought about solving the misunderstanding afterwards, but he never thought that they’ll meet in this place.

However, it was currently the time for the sales match. As if thinking in the same way, Kotori approached the three of them in a very business-like manner.

“One copy is 500 Yen. Would you like to buy three copies?”

“Eh? Ah, yes. Please.”

“Uwah, doesn’t the front cover looks amazing? Who draw this?”

“Anyway this character, don’t you think it resembles Itsuka-kun?”

After saying this, the three of them bought the books and then waved their hands good-bye to Tohka. Even though those three like to create a riot, they seemed to still have some common sense at least. They decided not to create trouble by bothering the other people who were lined up behind them.

Shidou sighed in relief and went back to selling.

A few moments later, a new group of three girls, with seemingly different ages, came up to the booth.

The first was a tall woman who seems to be in her twenties, the other one is a short girl and the last one looks like a half-Japanese girl with blonde hair.

The three people walked to the booth and called out for Origami when they saw her.

“Ah, it’s her. What is it? Calling us out all of sudden.”

“-----Captain.”

Origami responded back to the tall woman. Then Shidou went “Ah” and clapped his hands. Come to think of it, that woman is from the Anti-Spirit’s Team that Origami was in-----the captain of AST. Her name is KusakabeRyouko. Somehow just like Tohka, Origami also contacted her acquaintances. And the other two girls are seemingly members of AST as well.

“Origami-san! It’s been a while!”

“Ah~, did you cut your hair? You sure are decisive~”

“Mikie, Mildred.”

Origami called out their name lightly. And then the girl who was called Mikie went \*Uu\* and acted like she was wiping her tears.

“Uu.....Since Origami-san retired so suddenly, my loneliness continues every day. Please come back.....”

“That’s right~. Why did you retire so sudden~?”

“It can’t be helped. I have my reasons; I won’t be coming back to AST.”

“Is that so.....How disappointing----Ouch!”

Then, Ryouko hit Mikie’s head lightly.

“.....Geez, you all, why did you have to talk about AST in this kind of place?”

“Ah.....! I-I’m sorry, my mistake.....”

“It’s alright. In a place like this, such words will be buried away.”

Origami said that with a light tone. In turn, Mikie stared at Origami with a wondering expression.

“.....By the way Origami-san, your atmosphere has changed a little bit.....?”

And then Origami entangled her arm with Shidou’s arm.

“Because of him.”

“Wha.....!?”

“Kyaa~! Eh, so that’s the reason~?”

Upon hearing Origami’s answer, Mikie had a shocked expression while Mildred’s cheeks started blushing. However, Ryouko hit Mikie and Mildred’s heads with both of her hands to stop them.

“Hey, don’t be so noisy. -----Since we’ve already come all the way here, we’ll buy some. Anyway, can I have three copies?”

“Alright.”

Origami took the money lightly and handed over the books. After that, Ryouko began noticing Tohka and the other Spirits with a dubious face.

“.....Hey, Origami. Those girls, I think I’ve seen them before.....”

“Your imagination.”

“You think so? But.....”

“Your imagination.”

“No, but-“

“Thank you very much.”

“.....”

Origami declined with a clear tone, Ryouko let out a sigh as if to show that she was giving up. Then, she takes Mike and Mildred to leave with her. While leaving, Mike went “I-I won’t lose!” and pointing towards Shidou. Meanwhile, Shidou didn’t know how to respond back to her.

However-----There’s still something that he doesn’t understand. Upon looking at the number of people who lining up in front of circle <Ratatoskr>, it’s obviously not only because they using ‘Shills’.

As if guessing what Shidou is thinking, Nakatsugawa, who was arranging the cardboard box, raised up his voice.

“That’s not a strange thing. It’s true that our booth wasn’t printed on the catalogue. However, in the other side, we are [Mysterious Circle] who suddenly appeared. Upon knowing our existence, wouldn’t lots of people be interested?”

“T-That’s true but isn’t the most important thing here to make our existence known?”

When Shidou said that, Nakatsugawa lifted up his glasses.

“Did you forget, Shidou-kun? Our place is next to the most popular circle <Honjou-dou>.”

“Ah-----“

Shidou raised his eyes. Probably that’s the case. It’s not strange that people who were coming to buy Nia’s books would get interested by the mysterious booth next to Nia’s circle.

And then-----

“-----Is it here? The circle that wasn’t printed on the catalogue?”

“But, why did they suddenly become a wall booth?”

“Aah.....Anyway isn't the appraiser, MUNECHIKA with them?”

“Really!? Any circle who he has his eyes on them will have their popularities rise rapidly. Any author who he recommends will also definitely get a huge successful in commerce and will be admired, that one!?”

“What did you said!? The champion of Moe Anime, the champion who won 7 times MUNECHIKA!?”

“The leader of the large group Super Galaxy, MUNECHIKA has come back!?”

“.....”

Those kinds of conversations resounded throughout the hall.

Shidou started at Nakatsugawa silently; his face appears to look a little bit troubled.

“Right now I'm only a humble ordinary staff member.”

“H-Haa.”

He got a feeling that he shouldn't continue asking any further.

Anyhow, the match seemed to have finally begun. The long line in Shidou's booth seemingly attracted more people to come. After they had bought the books they were intending to buy, these general participants started to line up in front of both Shidou and Nia's booths from every direction.

Upon looking at the scene, Kotori, who had just received the supply books from Kawagoe, gave a loud shout.

“Alright.....Let's keep going. There are three people in Nia's circle. Her plan is for two people to arrange the line, and the last one to manage the stock. As for us, we have 12 people in our booth including Kawagoe and the others. Based on our staff, we are far ahead in terms of the number of books we can sell at once!”

Upon hearing Kotori's words, the Spirits began hailing to each other while they continued selling books. The number of cardboard boxes piled up in the back began to decrease one by one.

And then, circle <Ratatoskr> started catching up to the huge difference between them and <Honjou-dou> right away. The number of their leftover stock was almost the same as Nia's.

Kotori folded her arms and took a glance towards the next circle.

“Fufun, how's that, Nia? We're catching you up. Since the number of our cashier is more than yours, we have advantage in terms of speed. Or perhaps you consider this as foul-play?”

After saying that, Kotori distorted her lips in provocative manner. Her companion, the Spirits, also seemed to not really be interested in saying anything.....Anyhow, Nia's



opinion in the beginning of the match about the possibility of their books ending up as wasted paper seemed to have backfire on herself.

However Nia, upon being provoked by Kotori, only replied back with a nonchalant tone.

“Ng-----? No, I didn’t say that. Even something which is well-drawn will also be useless if they don’t get sold very well.....Well, it’s true that I didn’t think that you all would be able to go this far.”

Nia clapped her hands.

“But.....Don’t you think it’s still too early to feel so confident like that?”

“.....What did you say?”

Upon hearing Nia’s words, Kotori raised her eyebrow.

After ten minutes later, something began to change.

The line in front of <Ratatoskr>’s circle was gradually shrinking in size. Meanwhile, <Honjou-dou>’s line in the opposite direction was still continuing strong.

“T-This is.....What happened?”

“Even if you asked me, weren’t you just about to turn our current status just now?”

Nia raised up her voice to reply to Kotori’s dismay.

“Cute salesgirls and a large quantity of shilling, and then various kinds of merchandise used to target your gender demographic. That’s true that this method would probably be effective in attracting people, but in the very end it will end up in vain. It seems like selling those 5000 copies was impossible after all. -----Even though I just said that a good book that is well drawn will be useless if it’s not getting sold; in the end, what’s participants want is [An amusing book]. Although I’m a blank right now, up until now I’ve been coming here for several years. Unlike you newcomers who don’t know what to draw, you’re not thinking that those differences will be buried away in only a day?”

“Kuh.....!”

Kotori replied in dismay.

However, what Nia said was true. Up until now, Shidou and the others had only relied on their secret weapon and somehow managed to catch up with <Honjou-dou>.

Meanwhile, all participants who was lining up in front of circle <Ratatoskr> have finished buying their books. There was no one coming anymore. But there were still 4 cardboard boxes remaining. In a simple calculation, there were more than 200 volumes left.

“S-Shido.....People stopped coming.”

“.....W-What should we do?”

The salesgirls Tohka and Natsumi raised up their voices in a worried tone. Shidou was desperately trying to think of something.

“Something.....Is there nothing we can do.....!? If this continues.....!”

However, he could not think up any other effective method.

Meanwhile, the line in <Honjou-dou> continued to attract more people to buy their books without any interruption. Soon, one more of their remaining 4 boxes had become empty.

“Kuh.....What should we do.....!?”

In this case, Nia will finish selling the books faster. In other word----Shidou and the others will lose the chance to seal Nia.

However, no matter how urgent it is, it wasn't a good idea to keep his thoughts floating inside his mind. He can only look at the participants passing by while placing his hands on the table.

-----However, a moment later.

Someone gently takes Shidou's hand, which was sinking in despair.

“Eh.....?”

Then, Shidou looked at the owner of that hand, -----Miku, she was smiling.

“Ufufu, giving up like this isn't very like darling, you know~? The match still hasn't finish yet. Rather, it's just beginning.”

“Miku.....?”

Upon hearing Miku's words, a big question popped up in Shidou's mind. -----From the way she's was speaking and her facial expressions, she was not trying to cheer Shidou's up out of nothing.

Miku nodded a little and looked at Nia.

“Well then Nia-san, this is the match.”

After saying that, Miku pointed her fingered to Nia.

Upon looking at that action, Nia made a puzzled face.

“.....? Though I don't know what you're going to do, but won't it be hard to catch up with this large difference from now on?”

“Ufufu, I wonder about that~. -----Hey Nia-san. You seemed to be captured by DEM for a long time, but do you know about SNS~?”

“Aah, it's Social Networking Service, right? Of course, I know. I'm not the owner of an omniscient angel for nothing.”

“.....But you didn't know about me, right~? Aren't you not interested at all to investigate about me~? Is that so~?”

“.....No, I’m sorry.”

Miku sounded like she was going to complain to Nia, but she swung her head to clear up her thoughts.

“Anyway! The SNS right now is a service used by more than half of the whole nation. --  
-----Moreover, looking at the age-group of the people in this hall, don’t you think there are more people included in that percentage~?”

“.....! Miku, don’t tell me-----“

Kotori raised her voice as if realizing something. Quickly, she took out a smart phone from her pocket and begins operating on the screen for some reason.

A few seconds afterwards, Kotori chocked.

“H-Hey, Kotori. What happened?”

“This-“

Kotori showed the screen of the smart phone towards Shidou to answer him. Tohka, Yoshino and Origami, who were near him, also looked at the screen together.

What’s shown is the page of SNS, but.....There’s Miku’s icon was on it and there’s a comment written down along it.

“Izayoi Miku: I’m helping out my friend’s circle in Comico, please come~! It’s on the East A-20.5 at Circle <Ratatoskr>, I will hand over the books with my hands and -----  
Photographs are Ok too~!”

“Wha.....!? M-Miku?”

Shidou raised his eyes in surprised, Miku went \*Nii\* smiling, then \*Ton!\* she poked Shidou’s chest using her index finger.

“Looking at darling and everyone working so hard, I can’t just stand still without doing my best too. Because I’m also the same as Natsumi-san, I also want to be helpful for everyone.”

“Miku.....”

At the moment Miku lowered down her glance and then \*Bang!\* she turned her face towards Nia.

“That’s true that we’re no match with you if we use a straight method. That’s why we will create another shortcut to defeat you once and for all!”

Pointing her finger in provocative manner, she continued.

“Then, let me show you Nia-san. The power of woman you didn’t know about. And be sure to carve this inside your mind. My name-----Izayoi Miku!”

And then Miku extended her hands as if she was performing an opera.

Who would have guessed that along with that action-----At the moment, from the entrance hall, there were a large number of footsteps that started to resound; it was just like the time when the opening had started.

“-----It's Showtime!”

Miku lifted up her hand and snapped her fingers.

And then, a massive group people came into the hall and simultaneously rushed to the front of circle <Ratatoskr>.

“Wah! Isn't that the real Miku-tan!?”

“Seriously, the original one!? Why in such a place.....!”

“Ah, I heard that you'll handover the books with your own hands, is that true.....?”

A boy asked her nervously. Miku chocked for a moment upon seeing the figure of a man, but then she started smiling right away.

“Yes, that's true~. Everyone, thank you very much for your support!”

“Uwooooooooooooooooooooooh!”

Upon hearing Miku's words, all participants raised up their voices altogether in a shouting manner until their roar could be heard by everyone inside the hall. Then, they all started lining up in front of circle <Ratatoskr>.

“.....! Kaguya, Yuzuru! Please arrange the line! Kawagoe and the others help to supply the books and lead the participants who are going to pay!”

Kotori, who was taken aback for a second, returned to her commander mode and began ordering everyone again.

“Shidou, Tohka, Yoshino, Origami and me will continue being the cashier! Natsumi continue selling and hug Miku in order to prevent her physical condition from getting worn out!”

“Isn't my role somewhat strange!?”

Although there's one complaint being raised up, all Spirits went back to their respective work.

Upon looking at it, Nia knitted her eyebrow a little.

“Fuun.....So she can really do that. That girl really is a celebrity after all.”

“.....Aah. Isn't she's amazing? She's our prideful idol.”

“Don't tell me, you're not going to say that this is unfair?”

Shidou and Kotori looked at Nia while saying that, Nia shrugged her shoulders and nodded.

“Of course. But, can you catch up from now on?”

Nia sharpened her glance and lifted the tip of her lips. Shidou nodded to reassure her.

“.....Obviously! We'll overtake you for sure! It's also for the sake of everyone who has already supported me! And for Nia too! It's also for you sake.....”

And then Nia laughed while selling her books and replied back to him.

“Well thanks for that! But even if you say that, I won't give you any discount~!”

“No problem! Because we'll win for sure!”

“Ahahaha! That's right, obviously! If you really can win, then-----”

Then-----

Nia who was laughing earlier suddenly stopped her sentence.

For a moment, a big question floated inside Shidou's mind-----Then he realized the reason right away.

In Nia's circle booth. Over there, a woman who was wearing thick glasses had come.

“T-Takajou-sensei.....”

Nia gave out a dumbfounded voice.

Right. She's the manga artist who Shidou and Kotori had a conversation with yesterday, Hiroki Takajou.

“Ahaha, it's been a while Honjou-sensei. I heard that you'll be participating in the circle exhibition after a long time, so I came.”

“Ah, that's.....Uhm, thank you.....”

Just now, Nia's facial expression suddenly took a different appearance from earlier.

“I'm sorry for suddenly coming. Please forgive me if I bothered you. But .....Can I ask you something?”

Takajou looked to Nia through the lens of her glasses. Nia awkwardly averted her gaze away.

“.....Did I do something rude to you without my realization? If that's the case, then please forgive me.”

After saying that, Takajou bended her body and bowed to Nia. After that, Nia seemed to be confused and averted her gaze away.

“S-Such thing.....There's no such thing!”

Nia gave out a high-pitch voice with a trembling tone.

It was quite different from Nia's usual nonchalant tone.

“Is that so?”

Takajou widened her eyes. However, Nia replied her with a difficult face.

The silence continued for a while. Takajou judged that it wasn't good to stop in front of Nia's booth any longer. She let out a sigh and bought one copy of the book and bowed to Nia once again.

“Even if you hate me.....I... I will still enjoy Honjou-sensei's books.”

“Ah.....”

Nia seemed to about to say something to her, but in the very end she couldn't continue her words for some reasons. Nia could only bow back to her.

“.....”

Upon looking at that scene, Shidou remembered that something feels off about the conversation he had with Takajou yesterday, but now he was sure about the reason.

“Nia.”

“.....! Aah, boy. It seems like I showed you something embarrassing. But the match is---“

“You.....About that person, you like her, don't you?”

“Huh!?” Upon hearing Shidou's words, Nia widened her eyes in surprised.

“W-What are you saying, boy? I don't have that kind of hobby-“

“No, that's not what I mean. That person.....How should I put it, as a friend?”

Right. Shidou remembered that it was the same sensation he felt yesterday.

Since Nia has the power of <Rasiel>, she became afraid of humans. That's why Nia claimed that she depends on 2D that will never betray her. The end result caused her to become a manga artist.

However, there's one thing that made her despair different from the other Spirit's despair.

As Nia tried to stay inside human society, she kept the basic ability of communication with her.

Probably, that's the reason why something that feels off.

Kotori guessed that Nia probably used <Rasiel>'s ability to investigate about Takajou and after founding out about her true character, Nia started keeping her distance from her.

However, Shidou felt differently though. If it was Nia, even if she knew the true character of her friends, she would still continue a dry relationship on the surface and just follow the flow-----And.

While thinking about that, one possibility floated inside Shidou's mind.

"Nia, you.....Perhaps, you're scared?"

"Huh? W-What the—"

"If you become close to her like that, then one day you'll become defeated by your own curiosity and use <Rasiel>-----But you didn't want to get disappointed by the friend you finally created, so you decided to take some distant, right?"

Nia kept her silence for a moment upon hearing Shidou's words, she turn away and continued selling the books.

"Haa, I don't understand at all what boy is saying! Ah, it's 500 Yen."

"Then what's with that earlier! If it's you, generally you would still be able to interact with a person that you disliked!?-----Thank you very much!"

Both Nia and Shidou dealt with the participants while exchange glances.....Somehow the scene has become an odd quarrel.





"You're so noisy! Just focus on selling! -----The end of the line is over there!"

"I'm sorry, but I can't do that! The reason why I wanted to win is because I wanted to save you! It'll be meaningless if I leave this problem just like that! -----Yes, please take the book from over there!"

In response to Shidou's words, Nia groaned out of irritation "Guuuuuuuuuuuh.....!".

And then because she cannot stop dealing with participants, Nia shouted as if cannot take it anymore.

"You're right, what's so bad about being scared! I'm also wanted to have friends! But it can't be helped! Do you think someone with a super-efficient observation camera that can observe anyone all anytime time can have a friend!? ---That is 1000 Yen!"

Nia said that with a sullen face on her.

Upon hearing that, Shidou can feel the loneliness inside Nia's heart.

Nia feared that she will lose to her own curiosity and end up investigating about her friends.....She also felt guilty over the fact that she could investigate everything about her friends as she pleased.

Having transcendental power similar to God had been the cause for her suffering. She isolated herself, since there was nobody similar to her. That is something that cannot be understood by people who don't have a Spirit's power.

However-----Shidou shouted his voice in concerned tone.

"That's.... how can you know if you don't try!"

"Ha! That's easier said than done! Let me ask you back Boy. If you know someone who can track you anytime no matter if you're in a toilet or taking a bath, and also be able to investigate into your past easily, do you think you can befriend them from the bottom of your heart!?"

Nia shouted back bitterly.

However, Shidou went blank for a while, and then he burst out into laughter.

"Haha.....Hahahahahahahahahaha!"

"W-What are you laughing about!?"

Nia asked while in a bewildered manner. Shidou let out a little sigh and brushed his hair up.

"-----Sorry, but I've already gotten use to that kind of person! Aah.....Now I get it already. You and I are really similar! Privacy!? What's so good about it!? Or rather, you who keep worrying about those kind of stuff looks like an angel in my eyes!"

"H-Huh!?"

Nia knitted her eyebrow since she doesn't understand at all what Shidou meant by that.

Upon looking at that expression, he continued speaking.

“If you want to take a look, then just do it! If you wanted to investigate about me, then do as you like! But still! I won’t hate you!”

“.....!”

Shidou continued shouting, as Nia struggled to make out a reply.

A few moments later, Nia grinded her teeth out of frustration and replied back to him.

“Huuuuuuuuuh!? What are you even saying!? Don’t you think it would be me who would come to hate you if I investigate about you?”

The time progressed on as they kept quarreling with each other. The line of participants in front of circle <Ratatoskr> and <Honjou-dou> did not get any shorter. They still had to keep selling their books.

Though <Honjou-dou> had the advantage with the remaining stock, which was only 500 copies left. <Ratatoskr> had the advantage of the speed of their cashier, since they have more people with them.

Some people were selling the books; some people were arranging the line, and another one was getting hugged by an idol that was tired because of handing over the books. She shouted in protest as her eyes became teary.

In the middle of the enthusiasm, everyone had already accomplished their missions.

Then-----

“-----Thank you very much!”

Shidou and Nia, who finally sold their last book, shouted those words simultaneously. Their voices resounded inside the hall.

“.....!”

“.....!?”

\*Haa, Haa\* Shidou was breathing heavily as he turned to look at Nia. And Nia also turned around towards Shidou at the same time.

Both parties looked extremely tired, as sweat was falling down from their foreheads despite it being the middle of winter. Nia’s glasses started to fog a little.

Then, after the two of them finished arranging their breaths, their voices resonated at the same time from <Ratatoskr> and <Honjou-dou>.

“<Ratatoskr>, sold out!”

“<Honjou-dou>, sold out!”

Right.

The books that two circle placed next to each other had sold out at the same time.

Upon hearing this declaration, all participants who were still lined up raised their voices in disappointment and left the place at the same time. However there's no use voicing their complaints and protests at all. There's no meaning for them to keep lining up in this place anymore. In that case, those people decided to search for other books.

Gazing at their figures, Shidou and Nia let out a large sigh while sitting back; there was the sharp sound of chair's pipe clashing.

".....Well, seems like it's a tie."

Kotori sharpened her expressions a little and turned to Nia.

"....."

Several seconds afterwards, Nia, who was lean her body on the back of the chair, looked up to the ceiling. She removed her glasses and wiped out the sweat using the sleeve of her cloth.

Then, she turned to Shidou and unfolded her arms. She searched for the doujin she exchanged earlier with Shidou. After finding it under her desk, she picked it up.

".....Alright, as reward for being able to go this far.... -----I'll read this."

".....!"

Upon hearing Nia's words, Shidou and the others from <Ratatoskr> exchanged their glances towards each other and gave out a shout of joy.

## Part 5

Approximately one hour after the doujin had sold out.

Shidou and the others were finished tidying up their circle's booth. All of the Spirits had also already changed their clothes, and went to the corner of the public park behind Tengu Square.

Since they are going to talk about something related to Spirits, they thought it was best to do it in a place where there's none of <Honjou-dou>'s staff were around, so they decided to leave the event earlier than usual.

By the way, Nia had her employee buy her some of the doujin that she wanted by using an outrageous amount of money. That's right, for a manga lover like Nia to not go and buy another people's doujin personally may seem strange, but seemingly she had already set up everything.

Nia explained, truthfully speaking, she wanted to buy the doujin just by herself, but she cannot entrust her booth to someone else, so she reluctantly picked up that decision.

"-----Well, then can I start reading it?"

After saying that, Nia sat on the bench of the park while holding Shidou and the others' doujin on her hand.

Though the match ended up in a tie and they were able to make Nia read the book, the main problem starts from here. If Shidou, the protagonist of this book, cannot please Nia enough, then he won't be able to seal Nia's Reiryoku.

"....."

Spontaneously, Shidou and the other Spirits were also sitting at the bench and were staring at Nia. Nia raised her eyes as she looked up to them.

".....It's hard for me to read while being stared at by everyone like this."

"A-Aah.....Sorry."

Shidou scratched his cheeks and turned away his gaze from her on purpose. The Spirits also turn away from Nia as if following Shidou's example.

Nia let out a sigh and sharply glanced at them.

"By the way, I'll say it again; I only agreed to read this book, right? But after that is different! Don't you have any expectation, alright?"

".....Aah, I understand."

Shidou answered with a nervous expression, and then Nia opened her shoulders a little bit and waved her hand as if asking Shidou and the others to turn away.

"Well then, please go over there for a while. Because when you're reading a manga, you don't want to feel interrupted, and it must make you feel relief."

"O-Ooh....."

Though he doesn't understand the last part, the point is that Nia wanted to be left alone. Shidou took all the Spirits along with him to move to a place that was a little bit far from Nia.

"Haa.....My."

Since she was already left alone in the bench, Nia let out a sigh.

".....Boy, he sure says anything as he pleases."

Then, recalling what happened in the hall previously, she distorted her face out of irritation.

However-----She knew exactly the reason why she felt irritated.

In fact.....She had already hit the bull's-eye.

".....Since you already talked big, I won't forgive you if the book isn't good."

Nia blinked several times as if to clear out her thoughts. After correcting the position of her glasses, she glanced towards the book on her hand.

In the front cover, there's a character being printed that looks similar to Shidou. It was the same image Nia saw when she was handed the book a few hours ago. Although

the line is drawn a little rough, but the artwork obviously exceeded the limit of an amateur's skill. Does that mean they hired a Pro manga artist?

"Fuun. Well.....However, the most important part is the content."

Nia mumbled that and opened the front cover, and then she started reading the manga.

The drawing is.....Well, is considerably good enough for a doujin. Though the art from the page to page is different, somehow it doesn't reach the level where she could get stressed about it while continuing reading the manga.

The story begins from a boy, Itsuka Shidou who once encountered a Spirit girl.

A story about a boy who meet a girl who was always denied by humans due to having a mighty power.

After that, he meets so many other Spirits, and those Spirits opened their hearts to him due to his honest will.

".....I see."

A few minutes later...

Nia groaned and scratched her cheek as she finished reading the book.

The conclusion can be said-----Shidou and the others' book have far exceeded Nia's assumptions.

At least, nobody would believe that this book was created by amateurs in only 2 days.

However.....On the other hand, that's just it.

It's true that this book's quality is pretty good. However, whether Nia will be able to love this protagonist Itsuka Shidou or not is a different story.

Moreover, the page isn't enough. Since they did not have much time, they couldn't show the charm of the protagonist very well.

And more importantly, this protagonist Itsuka Shidou doesn't seem realistic at all.

In order to make Nia falls for him, of course it was only natural, but Shidou was being portrayed too much like a hero. Even if Nia falls for this character, she will feels disappointed by the gap that the real Shidou has.

"It's unfortunate.....Boy. Although you seemed to have tried your best, but you can't make me fall for you with only this."

Nia let out a sigh while saying these words, and then she closed the book.

However, there's only one thing still bothering her mind. Nia then looking around, once she confirmed that nobody around, she raised her left hand to the empty space to manifest <Rasiel>.

And then, she's thinking something inside her mind as she touched the front cover of the book.

-----In order to figure out the scene when Shidou and the others drew this book.

Right. Although the content cannot get Nia's approval, as a manga artist she's interested in knowing the method they used to create a book with this quality in only a short amount of time.

<Rasiel>'s page started glowing. After Nia confirmed it, she touched the page gently.

At that moment-----The information about this book's working process had flowed inside her mind.

"...I see. After they decided about the story, they split task with that Natsumi girl as a main artist... but I guess this method won't be useful for me. There's no way I could get that much digital assistance. As expected from <Ratatoskr>, they sure are reckless."

Then-----Accordingly,

Nia, who was satisfied by the information flowing inside her mind from <Rasiel>, knitted her eyebrow in surprise.

(I wanted to tell her soon.....So that stubborn Nia will understand about it too.

-----That friendship is, a beautiful.....thing.)

That's, Nia heard Natsumi's voice.

".....Fuu."

Nia twisted her face with displeasure upon hearing that.

"Yes, yes.....Thanks for that. But sorry, about your valuable opinion, I-----"

However, before Nia could finish.

"Eh.....?"

The reason was simple. There had been a new text written on the page of <Rasiel> which Nia touched.

At the same time, there's new scene flowing inside Nia's mind.

That was the time when Natsumi still had her Reiryoku. Natsumi, who still harbored distrust towards humans, began to open her heart due to being touched by Shidou and everyone else's kindness.

"This, is....."

Nia let out a dumbfounded voice.

Then, Nia could figure out vaguely about what just happened.

<Rasiel> is an omniscient angel. However, in the very end it can only give information that Nia wanted to know.

Perhaps-----Somewhere inside her heart, Nia was thinking about it.

Just what kind of experience Natsumi came through until she could say such a naïve thing which Nia can't stand to listen to.

However, it wasn't only that. There's new text that appeared again on the page of <Rasiel>, and then new information traveled to her mind again.

Origami, Miku, Kaguya, Yuzuru, Kotori, Yoshino, and then-----Tohka.

Those girls who had completely closed their hearts, they began to change after their hearts were moved by Shidou's warmth light.

Aah, that's-----The scene is no different from what Nia just read from the book even for a little bit.

"Ah.....Ah....."

Right. Inside that book, everything wasn't being dramatized at all.

The boy named Itsuka Shidou really did his best to help those girls, without even considering his own condition.

There were not only one or two problems he faced during his encounter with those Spirits. The darkness that existed inside those girls' hearts, the shadowy past, or even----the cruel, true character.

But no matter how much problems came, Shidou never gave up. Even if he seems to be almost crushed, he would stand up again.

Now, she understood.

Not a single one of his words he said to Nia back then was a lie.

There's no doubt that for those girls, he is truly a hero.

Drop... Drop.

Water fell onto <Rasiel>'s page and was being illuminated by the book's light

"....."

After realizing that she was crying, Nia took her hand away from <Rasiel>.

Leaving Nia alone, Shidou was waiting in the bench of the west-side in the public park. He was shaking his legs because he could not calm down at all.

"Shidou, that's bad manners."

"A, Aah, sorry."

After Kotori pointed that out, Shidou stopped shaking his legs. However, looking closely, Kotori isn't the usual Kotori. She kept stirring the stick of the chupa-chups in her mouth.

Though, that's understandable.

Anyhow, Nia's judgment will not only decide whether her Reiryoku can be seal or not, but it will also decide whether they will be able to put Nia under <Ratatoskr>'s protection and safeguard her from DEM.

"! Shido!"

Then, Tohka suddenly raised her voice.

As if being snapped back into reality away by that voice, Nia can be seen walking slowly from the direction Shidou and the others gathered previously.

".....! Nia-----"

"Kuku.....So you come?"

"Nervous. How was the result?"

Shidou and the Spirits gulped down their saliva.

However, Shidou raised his eyebrow once Nia arrived in front of them.

Her eyes looked really red; it can be seen through her glasses lens.

"Nia.....? What happened?"

"....., No, nothing~....."

Nia answered with a light tone, and then took some time to breathe.

After she said that, Shidou couldn't ask anymore.

Moreover, there was still one more important thing bugging his mind right now.

"Then.....How was it Nia? Our book?"

"....."

As Shidou asked, Nia kept her silence for a while, she glanced towards the book on her hand.

And then "Haa", she shrugged her shoulders.

"Although you did it pretty well, but as expected I can't fall for you with only this one book. Isn't your way of thinking way a bit too optimistic? I'm sorry, but I'm not that cheap of a woman."

"U.....Gu....."

"N-No way....."

Shidou bit his teeth and gripped his fist. He felt like his body was losing its power. The Spirits also showed the same facial expressions.



-----However,

“.....But, well.”

Nia averted her gaze as she continues speaking.

“It’s not like there’s nothing good at all.....How should I put this? I can give you one more chance.”

“Eh.....?”

Shidou’s looked at her with widened eyes and answered back, Nia’s face went red out of embarrassment.

“.....That’s what I said, I’ll go on a date with you one more time. If boy really is a man, you have to do it.”

“.....”

Shidou felt the goosebumps run through his entire body. His body was re-invigorated with energy. He had the feeling of wanting to shout out while running around.

“Shidou!”

Tohka and the others were also the same. They all jumped to Shidou as if he was a striker who had just made a goal.

“Kya~! Darling, you did it~!”

“It’s.....Amazing!”

“Of course. That’s the result of Shidou’s charm.”

“Hahaha.....Stop it everyone.....Anyway, Miku and Origami please stop it already. That’s, uhm? Why does it seem that you all trying to take off my clothes while in the middle of this confusion?”

“Eeh~? There’s no such thing~. Right~?”

“We didn’t do that. Even if it’s end up that way, that was only an accident. Not anyone’s fault.”

“Kya~!Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa~!?”

“H-Hey, you two... What are you doing to Shidou!?”

Tohka tried to stop Miku and Origami. Triggered by that, the other Spirits also begin to joining in. Shidou was in the center being pushed by everyone.

“.....Fu, haha, ahahahaha!”

Upon seeing that scene, Nia couldn’t help but laugh.

“How should I put this.....Right, I’m envy of you all. ----Hey, boy. Perhaps, if it’s you—“

-----Then,

At the moment when Nia said that....

That [Abnormality] occurred.

Nia's choked and her body started trembling, and then she kneeled down while holding her head.

"Eh.....? A, A, A, Aaaaaah, aaaaaaaaaaaaa----!?"

Her expression was filled with pain, as she began to scream loudly.

"N-Nia.....?"

Without knowing what just happened, Shidou rushed towards Nia who was suddenly feeling pain.

A dark-colored Reiryoku began to overflow from Nia's body and started to spread on the ground. A moment later, a space quake alarm was ringing throughout the city because of the powerful Reiryoku that could be detected.

"Wha.....this is—"

"Nia! What happened!?"

Shidou and the others raised their voices out of panic. Kotori suddenly pushed something on her right ear and started talking. -----Somehow, it seems like she's communicating with control room through the intercom attached on her ear.

".....What did you say!? What does that mean!?"

"Kotori! What just happened? Nia is.....!"

When Shidou asked, Kotori replied to him with a pale face.

".....Reiryoku value, category E. -----Nia, she's going inverse.....!"

Kotori said those words desperately.

## Chapter 5: What's Yours is Mine

### Part 1

In back seat of a car driving through Tengu city,

DEM Industry's Managing Director, Isaac Westcott, was looking at the screen of a small computer on his hands with a happy smile.

"It's not a bad development. As expected, Knox and the others pilot crew members did a great job. If we were to have done it ourselves, there would have been some [Traces] remaining no matter what."

"-----Do you mean about <Material A>?"

Sitting next to him, Ellen asked while looking at the computer's screen. Westcott exaggeratedly replied his response.

"Aah. However, don't you think it's more suitable for us to call her by her code name <Sister> for now?"

"....."

Ellen kept her silence for a while, but then continued to speak.

".....More importantly, still, isn't it risky to release the Spirit we captured once?"

After saying that, Ellen knitted her eyebrow with a little displeasure from her.

Well, originally, <Sister> was a Spirit captured by Ellen's hands five years ago; the only Spirit possessed by DEM Industry. She feels dissatisfied by the current mission, which she considered as an unreasonable thing. However, Westcott loosened his cheek, as if finding it amusing to see Ellen's unusual facial expressions, which looked like a child pouting.

"What is it?"

"No, it's just like what you said. There's a possibility that we'll lose DEM most important property. However-----It's true that we were stuck, right?"

When Westcott said that, Ellen made a \*Muu\* sound.

"That's.....Perhaps, that's true, but---"

"During those 5 years, we continued doing any mental and physical torture we could think of to <Sister>. But still, we never were able to completely inverse her."

Westcott glanced at Ellen and continued.

"However, the <Princess>'s inverse form that descended before us three months ago was a truly splendid specimen, even though we didn't really do anything to harm her ourselves."

Westcott closed his eyes as if he was remembering the figure that he had seen before. Then, he let out a cold voice.

Right. During the unforgettable September of this year, Westcott and Ellen had succeeded in inverting the Spirit <Princess>.

And the reason for that was-----The boy who has the power to seal a Spirit's Reiryoku, Itsuka Shidou.

From his ability, he was found out by DEM's enemy, the secret organization <Ratatoskr>. He kept opening the hearts of each Spirit and sealed their Reiryoku. However, the bond which was born between him and those Spirits during the process was the main reason for <Princess>'s inversion.

"That's why; I let my dear precious Spirit <Sister> to be free from my hands for a moment. ----With a super small size Realizer being embedded inside her brain that made her forgot everything we had done to her body within the past 5 years."

That was why Westcott gave the order to give her a special <Treatment> out of charity. She must not have remembered the time when her belly got cut opened while she was alive, or when her skull got opened, or when her hands and legs got scrapped off one millimeter at a time. She couldn't possibly remember any of it.

There are 2 main reasons for that special treatment.

The first reason was simple. Because of all tortures and experiments they did to her every day, her mind had broken down several times. If her memories weren't sealed away, then she wouldn't be able to endure her distress back then.

And the other reason is-----

".....Hou?"

Westcott saw the numerical value displayed on the computer's screen beginning to change. Then, he moved his eyebrow.

"Is there something wrong?"

"<Sister>'s mental state has changed. -----Somehow, it seems like Itsuka Shido succeeded in strengthening his bond with her just like I expected."

Westcott raised the tip of his lips.

"Five years ago, when we managed to capture <Sister>, she had already given up on humans. Even though it's a tragic thing, it was the consequence of her power.

-----However, this time is different. When she met Itsuka Shido, she ended up just like the other Spirits. She experienced human kindness.

In the world where she gave up on sociability, she finds a light. Isn't that a wonderful thing?"

Westcott exchanged glances with Ellen, and then he creates an uncanny smile.

"Well then."

“Yes, let’s do it. After my signal, the Realizer installed inside <Sister>’s brain will activate. At that moment, all the memories she lost during those five years will come back to her vividly.”

Westcott lowered his eyes and looked at the numerical value on the computer’s screen.

Right. She realized that there’s still hope. She understands that she shouldn’t resent humans.

However-----Without ever knowing that this would be the cause of her despair.

“It’s a very simple thing. Rather than simply dropping the glass, it’s better to dropping it from higher place so that it would break easier.”

After saying that, Westcott looked up to the ceiling and raised his voice.

“-----Well then, let’s go, Ellen. For the sake of our dearest wish.”

“Yes. You’re right.....Ike.”

Ellen responded with a quiet voice. Westcott nodded in satisfaction, and then----- He looked forward towards the person sitting on the front seat of the car.

“I’m counting on you too. Please help Ellen.”

“.....”

Responding to Westcott, the girl shook her head without saying anything.

## **Part 2**

“A, aaa, aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa-----!!”

Alongside with Nia’s scream, which was full with agony, a mass of Reiryoku that looked like dirty mud flowed out from her body. After touching the ground, the surroundings started to melt away like a mountain of salt being poured with water. Everything was becoming muddled and destroyed.

It’s not only that. As she was still screaming, wounds on her hands and legs started appearing all over Nia’s body. An abundant amount of blood was flowing out from those wounds.

There’s nothing around her that could have caused those wounds appearing on her body. However, those wounds suddenly appeared all over her skin just like flowers that were blooming, as if she remembered something. From that appearance, it seems like those wounds on her bodies were the result of her Reiryoku.

And then-----Her Reiryoku and blood covered her entire body, changing her appearance.



Previously, what's appeared before Shidou's eyes was the silhouette of a Nun. But that figure doesn't resemble with the image in Shidou's memories at all, she transformed into something more ominous.

"N-Nia....."

Upon seeing that appearance, Shidou let out a dumbfounded voice.

Shidou has, no-----everyone who was present here has seen this scene before.

The inverse of the Sephira crystal; the phenomenon of a Spirit inversing happens when they sink into the abyss of despair.

However.....There's something off.

Both Tohka and Origami have inversed before just like Nia. -----For Tohka, it's because Shidou almost got killed before her eyes. For Origami, that's because she learned that she had murdered her parents with her own hands.

However, in case of Nia, who is currently inversing right before his eyes, there's nothing causing her to go inverse.

Really, what just happened?

Instead, at that moment, Nia was only walking towards their direction.

That despair, there's no sign of a cause for it.

".....W-What happened!? Suddenly....."

"Nia-san.....! Why....."

Natsumi and Yoshino said that while frowning at the terrifying Reiryoku wave emitted by Nia.

The next moment, Nia's body started shaking; her movement was similar to a marionette controlled by strings.

"A, aaaaaaaa."

Twisted in pain, her facial expression was filled with agony. Her appearance, which was flushed with blood, looked completely like the statue of holy mother who was shedding tears of blood.

Nia then let out a hoarse voice which couldn't be described as a voice.

"-----<Bee.....I, ze.....bub>-----"

As if answering her call, the figure of a huge book appeared before Nia.

Just by looking at it already made them feel the overwhelming pressure. There's no doubt. What was before their eyes were a <Demon King>, just like <Nahemah> and <Satan>.

<Beelzebub>, which was floating on the air, began to open automatically. It turned its pages at a tremendous speed. And then those pages scattered around from the cover and started fluttering around the surrounding like a snow storms.

“T-This is.....”

“Be careful, Shidou. That’s part of the demon king. It’s not ordinary paper.”

Origami said with a calm voice. However, as if answering Origami, who spoke with cautious words, <Beelzebub> pages scattered around Nia’s surroundings in a battle formation, and then released a dark light.

“Wha.....!?”

Shidou raised his eyes in surprise upon seeing that.

From <Beelzebub>’s pages, several monster made out of darkness crawled out from the pages.

“-----!”

Those monsters begin shrieking and kicked the ground in preparation to attack Shidou and the others.

“Uwah.....!”

Shidou unintentionally stiffened his body upon seeing that. However-----before their hands could reach Shidou, the monsters were hit by a light. They were blown away in half a minute and their bodies started melting down as they fell from the air.

Right away, Shidou realized what happened. Origami, who standing behind Shidou, had already manifested her limited astral dress; she attacked those monsters using <Metatron>.

No, it’s not only Origami. All Spirits in that place, except for Kotori, had manifested their limited astral dress and summoned their angels. They gazed towards Nia who was producing the darkness that was creating those monsters.

“Everyone.....”

“Though I don’t really understand the situation.....But I know that I shouldn’t leave it like this!”

“Please leave those hindering monsters to us~! Darling please save Nia-san!”

Tohka and Miku raised their voices, while taking a fighting posture. As if to oppose them, <Beelzebub> pages begin fluttering around, a countless number of monsters appeared from those pages.

“Kuh.....”

Shidou lowered his body a little and frowned upon facing Nia’s military force, which was gradually expanding.



The only one who can seal a Spirit's Reiryoku is Shidou. In that case, Shidou has no other choice than to approach Nia directly-----Shidou himself doesn't object that.

However, there's one thing that made Shidou feel uneasy.

".....If I kiss her, will Nia return to normal.....?"

Right, the first time when Shidou opposed Tohka in her inverse form; once he kissed her, he succeeded in bringing back the usual Tohka's consciousness.

And then when he faced inverse Origami, she regained her consciousness because of Shidou's call from outside and [The other Origami] from inside.

But compared to Tohka and Origami, Nia and Shidou's relationship wasn't really that smooth. And also, the reason of her going inverse wasn't clear enough. In the middle of these conditions, he doesn't know whether he'll be able to return Nia to normal using the same method he used up until now.

Noticing that Shidou felt some anxiety, Kotori snorted to him.

"I don't know about that too. -----But, there's no other way, so it can't be helped, right? Up until now, we can only put our faith and believe that our voice will reach Nia."

".....Aah, you're right."

Shidou loosened his stiffen cheeks a little, and then he started at Nia's figure.

Although her appearance looks bizarre and ominous, there's a sorrow inside her scream.

"I'll save Nia. Everyone.....Please lend me your power!"

"Ooh!"

Responding to Shidou's request, the Spirits raised up their voices.

However, at that moment.....

"I regret to tell you this, but that won't come true."

That voice resounded from somewhere.

The moment after that, a girl wearing shining silver colored machine armor on her entire body appeared. She came down from the sky to the opposite side from Shidou, with Nia between them.

A girl with faint Nordic blonde hair..... a girl who believed herself, without a doubt, to be the strongest among all living things.

That girl continued her words as if looking down on Shidou and the others.

"Why is that, because I'm here now."

".....! Ellen.....!"

Shidou knitted his eyebrow while calling out the girl's name. Ellen, Ellen Mira Mathers. She was the strongest wizard of DEM, a human who could fight on par with the Spirits. [The human being who exceeds all other humans].

Ellen gave them a warning and then turned her gaze away from Shidou and the others, she gazed at Nia who was being swallowed by the darkness.

"-----I see. Doesn't your appearance look great, <Sister>? As expected from Ike."

Upon hearing those words, Kotori created a displeased expression.

".....To think that the timing is too perfect, this must be you're doing, right?"

"Yes. That Spirit is DEM's property since the beginning. How fortunate. Starting from now I have something I ought to do. Please leave this place right away, I'll leave you be for today."

When Ellen said that, she creates a gesture as if she's driven them away. Shidou bit his teeth.

"Don't joke around! I won't handover Nia to you all!"

"-----I don't have any plan to answering you."

Ellen brushed away Shidou's words; she gripped the hilt of the equipment on her back and pulled it out. The thick magical power radiance from the sword was released from the sword of light. -----The laser blade <Caledvwlch>. The equipment that is exclusive for Ellen's use.

In response to that movement, the monsters surrounding Nia started attacking Ellen at once.

However Ellen only knitted her eyebrow a little, she expand the territory around her body and swept those monsters around her.

"The demon king's power sure is a little bit troublesome. I will finish this quickly."

Ellen said that while activating her territory, she lifted up <Caledvwlch> and swung it at Nia.

However-----Before Ellen could come closer to Nia, a barrier of light counter the edge of <Caledvwlch>.

Tohka, who was nearby Shidou, had countered Ellen's attack.

"As if I'll let you!"

"Are you intending to interrupt me? I don't care though-----But in that case, I won't give you any mercy."

Ellen pointed a sharp glance, and then she released an attack that wouldn't be able to be seen by a normal person's eyes.

"Guh.....!"

Tohka frowned as she received the attack. Even though Tohka is a Spirit, she can't use her full Reiryoku. It's dangerous to face the strongest wizard. Ellen and Tohka kept attacking each other with their swords, but Tohka was gradually starting to be cornered by Ellen.

"Tohka!"

"Chi-----She can't face Ellen alone! Kaguya, Yuzuru, Miku, back up Tohka! Yoshino, Natsumi, and Origami clean up the way for Shidou from those black monsters surrounding Nia!"

Kotori, who was seeing the scene from behind, shouted her voice loudly. The Spirits answered and followed Kotori's instruction. They split up to both stop Ellen and to clean up the monsters surrounding Nia.

"Tohka and the others can't keep fighting Ellen for very long. Let's finish this quickly!"

"Aah.....! Please help me, Yoshino, Natsumi, Origami!"

The three of them nodded at Shidou's words, they begin summoning their angels.

"Please.....Retreat.....!"

"Hey, don't interrupt you all-----!"

Yoshino summoned the puppet <Zadkiel>, in the shape of a huge rabbit; she froze the water inside the air to stop the monsters' movements.

"<Metatron>!"

"..... <Haniel>!"

Using that chance, Origami shot a beam of light at the monsters using <Metatron>, Natsumi used <Haniel> to transform the pages of <Beelzebub>, which scattering on the ground, into leaves.

The military force spread out in front of Nia was already being swept out entirely.

Of course, there are some monsters that still remain around them, and as long as <Beelzebub> exists, it can continue to supply a tremendous amount of monsters. However, with the Spirits' assistances, it's not impossible to pave the way to Nia for a few seconds.

-----However,

".....!?"

There's a voice of someone's choking from the left side, then Shidou turns towards that direction.

And then, he his face expressed shock upon seeing the unbelievable scene before his eyes.

Origami pointed her angel <Metatron> towards her own body, and then released the ray of light. She press down the blood flowing out from the torn part of her astral dress and gave an expression filled with agony.

“Origami!? What the!”

“Kya.....!?”

“Uwah, wh-what’s this.....!”

However, the situation didn’t stop there. Yoshino and <Zadkiel>’s legs were frozen to the ground because of their own ice. The same thing also happened to Natsumi, <Haniel>’s light bounced back to her and transformed her into some kind of mascot character.

The three of them were attacked by their own angels. Upon looking at the strange situations, Shidou made a dumbfounded face.

But, it wasn’t only that. Next, Shidou felt like he couldn’t move his own body at all.

“Wha.....!?”

“M-My body.....Can’t move!?”

Kotori, who is behind Shidou, raised her voice. Somehow, it seems like the same phenomenon with Shidou happened as well to Kotori.

This felt a bit different than having their bodies being immobilized by a wizard’s territory. It seems like their bodies have ignored the instructions from their brains completely to the point where they cannot move at all.

“Don’t tell me.....!”

Soon, Shidou realized something.

Nia took part of her astral dress and turned it into a drawing pen, then it automatically wrote something on <Beelzebub>’s pages.

“.....! Future Describing.....!”

Right. Nia had once shown him that ability of <Rasiel>. Perhaps, <Beelzebub> could also write something to control Shidou and the others’ future movements.

However, compared to what Nia showed before, the writing speed this time was much faster. It made him feel like they’re currently opposing a God who’s writing the future.

“U, gu-----!”

Shidou put his strength into his hands and legs, as he struggled to move forward. However, everything below his neck seemed to ignore his instruction. He couldn’t move at all.

While struggling, Nia kept creating monsters from <Beelzebub>’s pages to bring back the military forces that Origami and the others had defeated before.

Those monsters came closer to Shidou and the others slowly but certainly.

“Shit.....! Move! Movee! If I’m here, then who’ll save Nia!”

Those monsters reached out their hands towards Shidou’s head.

Shidou, while shouting, put his strength inside his whole body.

“-----Uooooooooooooooooo!”

At the moment,

Shidou’s body started getting hot as if he was having fever. Then, a tremendous power blew violently from Shidou’s body.

The monsters surrounding Shidou were sent flying at once. At the same time, the something that was binding Shidou’s body was released as well.

“This is.....!?”

Shidou’s wondered at what happened to his body just now. However, he soon understood it. That wind belongs to Yamai sisters’ Reiryoku.

“Shidou!”

Kotori gave a shout from behind. However, for some reasons, the bind on her body was still not released. Yoshino and Origami were also the same. Natsumi was still in the form of a strange mascot character.

Upon seeing it, Shidou could guess. Probably, it was just like with Miku’s <Voice>. Though <Beelzebub>’s future describing can manipulate the action of a human drawn on it-----It can’t completely effect someone who has the Spirit’s Reiryoku needed to resist against its power.

In that case, what happened just now is true. Although Shidou has a human’s body, his body possesses the Reiryoku of eight Spirits inside.

“-----I’m going.”

Shidou, said that in short, and then started running towards Nia.

Of course, those monsters started chasing after him in response.

But, why is that? The Shidou right now, he doesn’t really feel that they’re threat anymore.

“-----<Zadkiel>!”

Shouting, he steps on the ground. At the moment, the surrounding of where he stepped on began to freeze, binding the monster’s legs to the ground.

Right. It’s Yoshino’s angel <Zadkiel>. Somehow, it feels like Shidou could control it.

Aah-----That’s right.

He began to grasp the feeling when his consciousness was vague.

On the beginning of the month, Shidou went berserk because of the path connecting the flow of Reiryoku between him and the Spirits got disturbed. As a result, he had to be saved by the Spirits.

However during that time, Shidou became capable of manipulating all of the angels at his own will.

And then the feeling of that time still remained inside his body and in the depth of his heart.

Of course, this thing was unpredictable. Absolutely, using those angels will be no match against the real power when the actual Spirits use them.

However-----It's enough for now.

After knocking down those monsters, he creates his way to Nia.

There are seven angels dwelling inside Shidou's body, and those powers were enough for him to pass these obstacles.

"-----!"

Those monsters step over the other monsters that had their legs frozen by the ice. As they start to chase after Shidou.....

Shidou stretched out his right hand. He made up his mind and called out its name.

"<Sandalphon>!"

And then as if responding to his call, a large sword appeared out of nowhere. Shidou swung that sword-----<Sandalphon> at his enemies.

"Haa!"

The light of the sword transformed into the shape of a crescent moon as he swung the sword. He cut off the surrounding monster's bodies in half.

Of course, his body received a great deal of pain in exchange for that power. His muscles felt like they were getting ripped off, his bones started cracking. In order to heal that pain, Kotori's regeneration flame began burning from Shidou's body.

He felt the pain and burning sensation all over his body. However-----Shidou let out a shout.

"Ooooooooooooooh!"

That's the ability of Miku's angel <Gabriel>, a pain reliever song. Although calling such a shout as a song would probably make Miku scold him. As that voice rang through Shidou's ears to his entire body, it somewhat made the pain and burning feeling vanish.

And then after knocking down those monsters-----

Shidou come closer towards Nia who was kneeling down in the middle of black mud.

“Nia! Are you alright!? Pull yourself together!”

“Aa, aaaaa, aaaaaaaaaa!”

However, Nia didn’t respond to Shidou’s call at all. She continued screaming because of the pain on her whole body.

Then, Shidou realized something at the moment, he shook his shoulders.

He took a deep breath and raised his voice.

[Nia!]

Right. He used <Gabriel>’s song that he applied for his own body previously. He put its power inside his voice and called out Nia’s name.

“.....”

And for the first time, Nia’s body shook a little as if responding to Shidou’s voice.

[.....! Nia!? Can you hear my voice!? I’ll save you now, alright!?”

“Shi.....dou.....”

Nia turned with her cheeks wet from the blood and let out a hoarse voice.

From that reaction, he could guess. Although he doesn’t know for sure, perhaps Nia’s current state now is caused by the [Pain] she feels. In that case, if he used the pain reliever song, then he would be able to bring back Nia’s consciousness somehow. Thinking that way, Shidou reached his hand out to Nia.

When Shidou’s hand almost reached Nia’s shoulders, at that time...

“-----You can’t do that kind of thing.”

When he heard that voice, something flew towards his direction in tremendous speed from the sky. A great light was being thrown before exploding in front of Shidou’s eyes.

“Uwah!?”

Because of the sudden attack, Shidou collapsed on his back in that spot.

Although, he didn’t have the time to collapse in that place right now. He fixed his posture soon and turned to Nia.

“.....Eh?”

Then, Shidou gasped in shock as he lets out a dumbfounded voice.

Over there, since who-knows when, the figure of a girl who wasn’t there appeared. Perhaps, that girl knew that it was her chance to fly towards them while they were preoccupied.

She was a blond haired girl that had her hair half-brained, and with blue eyes with a color looked just like the sky. That girl has a white skin and a sweet voice.

However, there's no expression on her face-----On her body, she wears the metal armor usually used by wizards.

She was wearing a similar wiring suit like Ellen's, a CR unit that was neon purple colored. That elegant appearance looks like an armored knight from mediaeval ages. However, what's snatched away Shidou's attention is the equipment that girl has.

On her hand, that girl was gripping a double edge laser sword.

And then she pointed out the edge of her sword towards Nia's belly, just like a butterfly that got crucified to the ground.

"Ni-----a? Nia!"

As Shidou was shouting, a clot of blood came out from Nia's mouth.

"You! What did you do to Nia!? Go awaaaaaaay!"

While shouting, Shidou gripped the hilt of <Sandalphon> and swung the edge of the sword towards the girl before him.

However, before the edge of <Sandalphon> could touch the girl, the girl expanded her territory to stop that attack.

"Wha.....!?"

Even though she didn't put so much strength on it, her territory is really thick. That accuracy is comparable with Ellen's.

The moment when that girl narrowed her eyes, she expands the range of her territory at once and easily blew away Shidou's body.

"Guwah!"

"Shidou-----!"

Shidou, who was falling down at a high speed, was caught by Origami just in time. Somehow, since Nia received damage, <Beelzebub>'s effect has stopped.

"S-Sorry, Origami. You sav—"

Shidou stopped his words right there. Origami, who was supporting Shidou's body, suddenly became pale as she looked at the girl who pierced Nia with her sword.

"Origami.....?"

Origami looked towards the girl's face, then she opened her lips a little.

"Why you're here? -----Artemisia Ashcroft."

"....."



Even though Origami was calling out to her, the girl in question Artemisia didn't even respond to her.

She put her strength into the laser sword on her hand, and then she pulled out the edge of her sword from Nia's body.

Nia's body bounced as blood was flowing out just like spring water from the place where Artemisia pulled out her sword.

"Nia!"

Shouting, Shidou rushed to her; however, the territory prevented him from getting closer to Nia.

As Artemisia slowly lifted up her hand and put her hand right on Nia's chest.

And then, it looked like she's mumbling something, the territory she manifested around her also began to change-----At the same time, Nia's body started emitting a dark light.

"....., ....., ....."

Nia, who already cannot let out any voice anymore, shook her fingertips hazily.

The next moment, a crystal which looked like it was created by condensation of the night appeared from Nia's chest. As if following that, the astral dress Nia wearing began to vanish into black mist.

".....!"

"Sephira!? But.....That color is—"

At the same time when Shidou gasped his voice in shock, Origami and Kotori raised their voices in astonishment.

Right. What's coming out from Nia's chest is a gem similar to the one <Phantom> gave to Kotori to turn her into Spirit back then.

-----Then,

".....!?"

Suddenly, Shidou could sense something dangerous and turned his glance to a certain direction.

Perhaps it was because his senses were sharpened from using a Spirit's Reiryoku. Or else, it's all because the presence of that person over there is way too bizarre to the point that he couldn't ignore it. Though he wasn't sure what it is-----But there's a [Foreign] existence that slipped in between them who wasn't here until just now. He knew and felt that person's presences clearly.

It's not only Shidou; all Spirits who were present there also pointed their gazed towards the same direction.

While being looked by everyone, that man was walking slowly towards Artemisia and Nia.

He was a man with ash-blond hair and wearing a black suit. Shidou looked at that man with a surprised gaze.

“Isaac Westcott.....!”

Shidou called out for that name while half-shouting. He looked at him with an astonished look. That man-----Westcott twisted his lips.

“It’s been a while since we met directly, Itsuka Shidou. I’m glad that you’re healthy.”

While Westcott said those words, he stopped right in front of Nia.

And then he stared at the floating black gem above her, he created a smile out of curiosity as if he had never seen this kind of thing before.

“How wonderful. This is the Inverse Sephira Crystal ----- Qlipha.”

And then Westcott took a look at it affectionately, he glanced at Artemisia.

“Good job, Artemisia. Seems like hiding you was the right decision. -----Itsuka Shidou and <Ratatoskr>’s people. There’s something I wanted to say to you too. It’s all thanks to you that I’m finally able to take one step closer to my dearest wish.”

Declaring those words loudly, Westcott slowly extended his hands to the gem.

“You.....What the—“

“What, you asked? Haha, are you the one who is questioning that? You, who have obtained the power of 8 Spirits within yourself.”

“W-What.....?”

Shidou asked that while knitting his eyebrow, Westcott gripped the Qlipha-----And then, he inserted it into his own chest.

“Wha.....!?”

“Ku-----Ooooooooooooo-----“

From the Qlipha, a pitch-black light started spreading around that place. It was accompanied by the ringing of an electricity-like sound. The place that had entirely become just like the night in an instant changed the surrounding scenery.

And then-----A few seconds later,

That [Night] had gathered and was absorbed into Westcott.

Over there, there’s no Qlipha that existed anymore.

“Fu-----“

However, Isaac Westcott was seen standing there with Reiryoku covering his whole body. The chest part of his suit was completely burnt off.



Right. He looked exactly like a Spirit.

“Haha, hahahahahahahahaha!Hahahahahahahahahahahahaha-----!”

Westcott bended his body and gave out a loud laughter. Upon looking at that appearance, Kotori's face became pale.

“It can't be true.....Did he just insert the Sephira into himself.....!?”

“Don't be stupid, that kind of thing.....”

Before he could finish his words, Shidou choked. -----Those words Westcott said earlier rang in his head.

“The power of a Spirit.....?”

Shidou let out a dumbfounded voice, Westcott threw a glance to them with an amused look.

“That's right.”

And then he lifted up his hand to the air and called out its name.

“-----[Tome of Divine Corruption] <Beelzebub>”

That is the name of the demon king.

“Wha—“

Shidou raised a panic voice, at the same time; a book appeared on Westcott's hand from the empty space.

At the moment, Westcott raised his eyes in surprised.

“Hou.....? What a wonderful thing, isn't it? Although this is the first time I've used a demon king, I'm able to know its power and ability in an instant. I guess this is how?”

Westcott lifted up his hands as if leading an orchestra.

As if following that, <Beelzebub>'s pages fluttering around just like with Nia before, from those pages, several black monsters came out.

“What.....!?”

Shidou raised up a surprised voice. Even if Westcott has absorbed Spirit's Reiryoku, similar to Shidou, it's unexpected for him to be able to use a demon king only in such a short time.

“I see.....So everything written down in this book will become true? Hahaha, it's worthy of its reputation as a demon king. The power to defy all the logic and truth in this world. Don't you think it's splendid?”

“Kuh.....”

Shidou grinded his teeth while staring at Westcott.

Then, in Westcott's back side, Ellen who was fighting with Tohka and the others, flew down and stood next to him.

"Ike."

"Yes, Ellen. You also already did a great job. -----Just see. This is the light of our way, the radiance of the great demon king."

"-----Its' wonderful. But, it's not enough."

"Aah. Only this much isn't enough. Only one isn't enough. To fulfill our dearest wish."

Westcott threw a sharp glance towards Origami and the others.

At the same time, Tohka and the others ran to Shidou while catching their breath. Somehow similar to Ellen, they sensed something dangerous and returned back to Shidou.

"Shido! Are you alright?"

"Aah.....But, Nia is.....!"

The situation had become worst. With the strongest wizard in the world Ellen as his companion, as well as Artemisia who has a power equal to Ellen. And then -----The demon king <Beelzebub> which is in Westcott's hands, along with the army of black monsters. Although there are several Spirits with him, the enemy is too powerful.

No, before that, giving Nia first aid is more important, they have no time to fight against Westcott and the others. What should they do-----?

Then, Shidou was sweating while thinking. But Westcott merely loosened his lips.

"-----However, I already achieved my main goal to obtain the demon king. Don't you think it's enough for today?"

".....!?"

Shidou knitted his eyebrow upon hearing Westcott's words. Shidou strengthened his grip on <Sandalphon>. He doesn't know what Westcott's actually aim was. There's the possibility that Westcott said that to catch them off-guard and then will follow by urging Ellen and Artemisia to attack them.

However, Ellen inclined her head upon hearing those words.

"Is that alright?"

"Aah, anyway, my body cannot keep up with inserting multiple demon kings at the same time. Besides..."

After saying that, Westcott showed a twisted smile on his face.

"Isn't it better to save something you enjoy for later?"

".....Tch."

At the moment, Shidou felt that the Spirits choking at the same time.

The malice that he felt since the first time they previously faced Westcott began to expand.

This man can't be described as cruel or brutal. He can only be defined as -----  
[Abnormal].

Right. He can feel a vague fear towards this man. That is, rather than being feared because of facing someone who holds a mighty power, it's better to say that is the fear of facing something [Unknown] that exceeded one's common sense.

"-----Understood. Well then—"

"Aah. Let's go."

After Westcott said that, Ellen and Artemisia nodded a little before kicking the ground.

After warning the Spirits, they shrunk their territory area, and three of them disappeared into the sky.

"Let's meet again soon. Itsuka Shidou and all the Spirits. Please enjoy your peaceful days even though you only have a little left."

"Wha.....Wait! Where are you going—"

"Shidou!"

Kotori grabbed Shidou's clothes, who trying to catch up to Westcott and the others. While Shidou was distracted by it, Westcott and the others vanished into the sky.

"Although I understand your feelings, but please calm down! We can't do anything to chase them right now! Besides—"

Kotori gazed towards Nia who was collapsed on the ground. Shidou gasped.  
"Nia!"

Landing on the ground, they rushing towards Nia, who was sinking in a sea of blood.

The wounds on her body looked terrible; especially, the wound created by Artemisia's sword after it had stabbed her in the stomach. She was hardly breathing, she's obviously couldn't hold herself any longer.

"Shit.....! Kotori! The Realizer!?"

"I already arranged it! But, since <Fraxinus> cannot operate, we can't use teleportation! I already prepared a car, so wait a minute! However.....<Ratatoskr> has never treated a Spirit who's Sephira was stolen! I don't know what will—"

"Kuh—"

Shidou distorted his face. However, Origami's voice could be heard from the other side.

"Anyhow, it'll be dangerous if this continues. First, we should stop her bleeding."

“Y-You’re right. But how.....”

“In the case of the large amount of bleeding from her stomach, it’ll be difficult without proper equipment. For the common first-aid treatment, we currently have no way other than wrapping her wounds with a piece of cloth. However, I don’t think that will be effective.”

“The, what should we do.....?”

“Calm down. ----Natsumi.”

“Eh!?”

Natsumi let out a surprised voice upon hearing her name being called suddenly.

“Ah, I-I got it.....!”

However, Natsumi understood Origami’s intention right away. Natsumi ran towards Nia’s side.

“<Haniel>.....!”

After Natsumi said that, a bloom-type angel appeared. Then, the mirror hiding on the edge of the bloom started shining; all of the terrible wounds on Nia’s body were erased.

It’s not like Nia’s wounds were healed. Using <Haniel>’s power, Natsumi changed Nia’s body which was filled with wounds into a neat body without wounds.

“With this.....I think it’s a little bit better now. But, I can’t return back the amount of blood which has already lost, and I couldn’t heal wounds inside her body. If we don’t give her medical treatment soon.....”

When Natsumi said those words, Nia’s situation got worse. Although all the wounds were already gone, her face turned pale; her breathing was gradually getting smaller.

“Dammit.....Nia! Can you hear my voice? The car has almost arrived!”

Holding Nia’s hand, Shidou spoke with a pray-like tone.

However, his shout was in vain, Nia’s hand become colder. Shidou felt irritated, impatient and helpless. He punched the ground in his frustration.

Then---

“.....! Wait, Shido.”

Then, as if noticing something, Tohka was staring at Nia with a sharp gaze, as if trying to make sure of something.

“As expected.....Shido, although it’s faint, Nia still has some Reiryoku left!”

“What did you say!?”

Shidou widen his eyes, Kotori took a deep breath as if noticing something as well.

"I see.....Before Nia was stabbed by the girl who came flying down from the sky, Shidou was able to return a part of Nia's consciousness, even if only a little.....! At that time, her inverse form wasn't complete anymore."

"W-What do you mean?"

"There's a possibility that the Sephira that Westcott snatched away back then wasn't in its complete form! Perhaps in Nia's body, there's still a little part of the Sephira left behind.....!"

".....!"

When Kotori said that, Shidou shook his shoulders.

In the beginning of the month, the conversation Shidou heard about him going berserk was floating in his mind.

"Kotori-----You've had said that there's an interval of Reiryoku circulating in a route connecting me to all of the Spirits.....didn't you?"

"Yes, that's....."

Then, Kotori realized what Shidou was thinking.

"Shidou, don't tell me—"

"Aah-----This is a bet, but I'll seal Nia.....!"

Right. There's a flow of Reiryoku formed between Shidou and all the sealed Spirits. In that case, if Shidou can connect the routes to Nia, Shidou thought that he might be able to supply Nia with the Reiryoku between him and the other Spirits.

Of course, Shidou still doesn't know whether Nia's affection level towards him has risen to the level where he could seal Nia or not.

However, it's just like what Kotori said earlier, there's no other way than to believe. ----- That Shidou and the others' feelings will be able to reach Nia.

"-----Nia. Please, accept.....me. I don't mind if you take away all of my power! That's why—!"

Shidou said that as if pleading to her. With everyone watching, he brought his lips towards Nia's lips slowly, and then their lips touched each other's.

At the moment, Shidou stiffened his face at the coldness of Nia's lips.

However right away, Shidou felt a familiar sensation of something warmth flowing into his body, even if only a little.

".....!"

There's no doubt, it's the sensation of whenever he sealed a Spirit's Reiryoku. When their lips separated, he called out Nia's name in a shouting manner.



“Nia! Nia!”

“Wake up, Nia!”

“Nia.....san!”

All Spirits raised their voices as if following Shidou.

Soon, Nia started to twitch her hands.

And then, she let out a hoarse voice.

“....., Everyone.....No need to shout, I.....Can  
hear.....You.....All.....”

“-----! Nia!”

As Shidou shouted, Nia closed her eyes once again, and then moved her lips a little.

Although her voice can't be heard-----But from her lip's movement, she can be seen  
spelling five letters: [T] [H] [A] [N] [K].

## **Epilogue: Did You Know That Nia!?**

### **Part 1**

“.....Hou?”

Inside DEM Industries-----Japan Branch's Office.

In a good mood, Isaac Westcott took a glance towards the book that was before his eyes, while he was sitting on the chair.

Floating on the air, a huge book existed. That omniscient appearance holds a mysterious terror that can be sensed just by looking at it.

“-----I see, this is interesting. All information I wish to know will flow directly into my mind. So this is the demon king <Beelzebub>? Somehow it seems I succeeded. Thanks to it, I found something very interesting.”

After saying that, Westcott laughed. And then the girl who was wearing a suit stood in front of him----Ellen inclined her head.

“Something very interesting, is it?”

“Aah. Please come here.”

“Wha.....”

Ellen walked towards Westcott while having a face that was full of curiosity.

Westcott stood up from his chair and placed his hand onto Ellen's shoulder. After that—

“.....! This is.....”

Ellen raised her eyes in surprised.

The information Westcott obtain from <Beelzebub> was being transferred to Ellen through physical contact. With this, Ellen saw some images flow directly towards her mind.

“.....Change the history? Does that mean the current world was once rewritten?”

And then, Ellen said in acknowledgement.

Right-----That's how it was written on <Beelzebub>.

To change history was a forbidden act that is against God's will---A pipe dream which will never become great.

However, that's absolutely not an impossible event; both Westcott and Ellen knew that as well.

“Aah. Itsuka Shidou borrowed <Nightmare>’s help. They time traveled to seemingly change the past of Tobiichi Origami.....Fu, he sure did a brave act.”

“Who would guess, such a thing—“

Then suddenly, before Ellen could finish her sentence, she held out her chest in anguish.

“Uguh.....!?”

A few seconds afterwards, blood started flowing out from the white blouse she was wearing. Ellen frowned while looking at the blood on her hand.

“This is.....”

“Somehow, because you already learned the memory of changing the world’s history, the wound you received has reappeared.”

Westcott said that while lifting the tip of his lips. Although for normal human such a thing won’t happen----But for wizards who use the Realizer, they’re capable of making the imagination inside their minds become reality. As for Ellen who is the strongest wizard, she’ll convert every intense image inside her mind into reality automatically.

“.....I see. So I received this blow from her in the previous world.....Although there’s <Ratatoskr> interference to consider, this is still a very displeasing thing.”

After saying that, Ellen knitted her eyebrow in a displeased manner.

Even so, her reaction was only normal. To make Ellen bear such a severe wound; inside Westcott’s memories, there’s only one person excluding Origami.

“.....Fu.”

Ellen knitted her eyebrow a little. Later, Ellen expanded her territory around her body to stop the bleeding and relieve the pain. Ellen returned her facial expression and posture to her usual state.

“However-----I see. <Beelzebub>; its power is worthy of the demon king’s reputation.”

“That’s right. However.....”

Westcott shrugged his shoulders a little at Ellen’s words.

“Somehow, this demon king is still not in its complete form yet.”

“-----It’s not in its complete form?”

“Aah, somehow before we could finish with <Sister>, it seems like Itsuka Shidou was able to restore some parts of <Sister>’s consciousness. It’s also seems that he will also get to use the angel’s power as well.”

“..... My apologizes. I should’ve done it myself.”

Ellen said that with a disgusted face. However, Westcott only exaggeratedly shrugged his shoulder in response.

“There’s no need to feel sorry about it like that. I’m satisfied with today’s result anyway. Although it’s incomplete, we certainly have taken one step closer towards our dearest wish. About the other half we missed, won’t we be able to take that later? I have my expectations on you, Ellen.”

“-----Yes.”

Ellen corrected her posture and nodded back.

Then, Westcott glanced towards a girl who was standing near the office entrance.

“Of course, for you as well.----Artemisia.”

“.....Yes.”

Artemisia Bell Ashcroft replied with a quiet voice.

## **Part 2**

In the waiting room of <Ratatoskr>’s underground facility, the Spirits all lined up.

There’s only one reason. Everyone was waiting for Nia’s medical treatment to be finished.

Nia lost consciousness again immediately after being transported to this facility. In this emergency, she’s currently undertaking medical treatment using a medical Realizer. Since the treatment will take some time, everyone had been ordered to return back their houses but.....They’re worried about Nia no matter what. Everyone who lives in the Spirit mansion and those who live in their own houses ended up saying that they could not return back home without hearing Nia’s status.

Although, everyone has not had any sleep since the beginning of the event. Following the fight against DEM, their bodies were completely exhausted because of the intense fight.

Even though everyone tried their best to keep awake, it seems like their eyes were gradually getting heavier.

“Mu.....”

Tohka rubbed her sleepy eyes. Shidou went \*Ahaha\* and made a wry smile.

“Are you alright? If you’re sleepy, then it’s alright for you to go the nap room.”

“Mu.....No, it’s alright. I already decided to stay awake until Nia wakes up.”

“Ng.....Is that so? Then, let’s try to stay awake for a little bit.”

Then, the door opened as Shidou was saying that. Kotori came to the room with a big yawn.

“Fuuaa.....Eh, everyone. You’re all still awake?”

“Aren’t you too? You were yawning like you were extremely sleepy. Don’t force yourself too much, alright?”

“S-Shut up!”

Kotori folded her arms while averting her gaze away.

“Don’t sulk like that.....More importantly, how’s Nia’s condition?”

When Shidou asked that, Kotori let out a breath from her nose and turned towards Shidou and the others.

“-----In short, she is already safe from critical condition. <Haniel>’s first-aid treatment and the circulation Reiryoku made by connecting the route have been a great help. Perhaps it won’t develop into a serious thing. Since the treatment using the medical Realizer has finished, I don’t think her waking up right now is a strange thing.”

“Ooh, really?”

“Yes. That’s why—“

Then, before Kotori could finish her sentence, the \*Pipi\* sound was ringing from the computer’s terminal inside Kotori’s pocket.

“----Speak of the devil.”

After Kotori confirmed what’s on the computer’s screen, she pointed out to the door while saying that.

“It seems that Nia is already awake. You all wanted to see her, right?”

“.....!”

Upon hearing Kotori’s words, all the Spirits that were sleepy up until now opened their eyes at that instant.

Kotori smiled upon looking at that scene and suggested everyone to go.

“Over here. Follow me.”

Shidou and the others followed Kotori to leave the waiting room. They come across the corridor and arrived at the ICU. After getting instructions from Kotori, they entered the room.

Inside the room, there is a wide space. Various machines were lined up along on the white floor with several cables coming out from the wall. Nia is currently inside a big medical pod in the center of the room. The cover of the pod was already opened. There, Reine was removing Nia’s oxygen mask.

Nia opened her eyes slightly, and then she looked towards everyone.

“.....Ah.....Everyone.”

“Nia!”

Shidou called out her name, and rushed to where she was sitting. All the Spirits also rushed to her as if following him. They all gathered around Nia.

“Are you.....Alright?”

“Kaka, don’t you look pretty healthy?”

“Consent. I’m glad to see you are alright.”

As all the Spirits were speaking to her, Nia slowly looked at everyone and then loosened her lips.

“Ehehe.....Somehow, since when did I become so popular.....? I’ll give you my signature in return~”

Nia said that jokingly, after breathing a little, she turned to look at Shidou.

"...I'm sorry, Boy. That I got caught by DEM —"

“.....”

Shidou held Nia’s hand tightly as if trying to stop her words.

“Boy.....”

“It’s alright. For now.....Thank you—for being alive.”

Shidou said that with teary eyes, Nia turned her face down for a moment before laughing awkwardly.

“Ahaha.....I give up, thank you. I’m bad at this kind of atmosphere you know?”

Then, after saying that, Nia let out a big sleepy yawn.

“Eh, it’s strange. I thought I’ve been sleeping up until now.”

“Haha.....It’s not strange. It’s already this late anyway.....”

After Shidou said that, he looked at the clock inside the room—Then, he said “Ah”.

As he was thinking something in his mind, he glanced towards Reine.

“Uhm, I’m sorry. Can I take Nia going out for a while?”

“.....Ng? Well, it’s true that her condition has stabilized, so I don’t mind if it’s only for a while, but.....Where are you going to take her?”

“That’s.....Something to look forward to.”

Shidou said that as he raised one of his fingers. Then, Nia and the other Spirits began inclining their heads in wonder.

A few minutes later, Shidou and the others went to the rooftop of the share building where the entrance of <Ratatoskr>'s underground facility was located.

The surroundings were still dark, and the weather is so cold that it felt like snow was going to fall at any time. Everyone wrapped their bodies with a coat, gloves and muffler to protect themselves from the cold.

"Hiya~; as expected, it's cold out here~! Hey, Yoshino-san. It's very cold isn't it? Do you want me to warm up your body?"

"N-No, uhm....."

Miku, who was jumping out first from the line, raised her voice. Yoshino made a timid smile as if bothered by it. Natsumi was holding Yoshino's clothes as if trying to protect her.

"Are you feeling cold, Nia?"

"Ng~, it's alright."

Shidou asked Nia while pushing her wheelchair. Even though they had already been given permission to go outside, Nia could still not walk, so they decided to take her out using a wheelchair.

"Then.....Why did we come here?"

"Aah. I thought it was almost time....."

When Shidou said that, the sky began to change.

The sunlight started coming through the intervals between the buildings. The pitch black sky started to change its color.

"Ooh.....!?"

"That's.....Amazing!"

The Spirits raised their voices in amazement. Nia also showed a surprised expression. She looked at the sunlight which was slowly reaching up and then lookup to Shidou.

"Boy, this is—"

"Aah, I thought it was almost time for the sun to rise. Although I forgot since we were too busy with the preparation for Comico. Isn't today January 1st? This is the first sunrise of the New Year. —Nia, it's perfect for your new start."

".....Haha, how showy~"

Nia said that while laughing, she turned her face upwards as she looks at the sunlight for a while.

A few seconds afterwards; faintly, Nia lets out a small voice.

".....Boy."

“Ng.....?”

“Really.....Thank you for everything.”

“Don’t mention it. It was because I had a lot of help from everyone else.”

“.....When my body has completely healed, I think I’ll go meet Takajou-sensei once again.”

“Aah. Isn’t that good? She is a good person. Perhaps...”

“Perhaps?”

Upon hearing Shidou said that, Nia laughed again.

“.....How should I put this, even though it’s annoying to get my power taken away by DEM, I strangely feel at ease. Thought it’s been nearly 30 years since <Rasiel> has been accompanying me.....No-no, I must be not worthy for that power.”

“30 years---You’ve been a Spirit for that long?”

The one who responded at Nia’s words wasn’t Shidou; instead, it was Origami.

“Um. Well, more accurately it’s been 27 years, though it’s almost been about 28 years.....Well, if you round it up then it’ll be the same, right? What do you think? I look younger than that, do I?”

Nia touched her cheeks while say that jokingly. And the same time, Kotori glanced towards Nia.

“Perhaps the Reiryoku has been suppressing all the cells in your body from aging. Since your Reiryoku has been sealed away, you’ll resume your aging starting from now on. You better prepare yourself.”

“Uwah—So that’s how it is. Ah~, I’ll correct what I said earlier. Thank you very much for everything up until now <Rasiel>.”

When Nia said that, Kotori laughed as if enjoying that.

And then Nia turned towards everyone as if remembering something.

“.....Come to think of it, when did everyone else become a Spirit?”

“Aah.....I became one five years ago; it’s about one year ago for Miku, I think? Origami is only recently. Then, the rest are all pure Spirits.”

“Eh.....?”

Responding to Kotori, Nia had a puzzled face.

And then, Nia inclined her head in wonder as she continued her words.

“Pure spirits.....? But, weren’t all Spirits once human?”



At those words,

“Eh.....?”

Everyone who was present on the rooftop widened their eyes.

## Afterword

It's been a while, I'm Tachibana Koushi.

[Date A Live 13 Nia Creation] has been released. I wonder how was it? Hopefully you all can enjoy this.

Anyhow, of course there's a new heroine appearing this time too. Nia, the otaku manga artist Spirit.

Although the shape of her astral dress is just like a Sister; somehow, she's a Spirit with a strong outlook. The astral dress design is really good once again. Though it based on a Sister, but her veil design is based on a pen and feather duster. The beam part of her astral dress is in ink color, and the center line of her astral dress is based on manga panels. There are subtle details hidden within the design.

Although almost every time a new heroine has appeared in [DAL], the modelling process of Nia this time was a pretty risky character. Although it's not a problem in few cases, basically, to create a heroine who has a short hair and wears glasses for a Light Novel is difficult. Nia too also only wears glasses in her civilian clothes. The reason was simply, it's hard to get popularity with that. Small breasts? That's only a status.

For a character, in case of a certain heroine, I mixed up elements the readers mostly accept and my own personal liking. However, it's hard to keep the balance of those combinations. If I put too much my own liking, that character might not be accepted by sharp readers, but if I strengthen the elements which most people like, it'll end up just like a character from any other series.

For Nia this time, although she has a lot of former with similar multi-elements combination. Thankfully, I think she's end up being a character that's never existed in [DAL] up until now. Oddly enough, I enjoyed writing about her.

By the way, personally thinking, with more volumes coming out, I feel that the tendency of creating a character with former elements has more potential. In order to create a variety of heroines from one type to another, there's such character like Natsumi that had appeared. Although I like a character with negative thinking process, I think they would stop me if I made Natsumi as the main heroine. Kuh.

Well then, the announcement from the earlier volume about [The Movie: Date A Live Mayuri Judgement] has finally been released!

Of course I also already watched it but, no~, as expected watching it from a large screen was totally amazing! After raising the curtain, there's Miku's live concert and everyone's date scenes, as well as intense battle. There are a lot of goodies for those who came—The special foam of Tohka's ultimate form was really good! Even though I thought the design was extremely attractive, what do you think maker-san?

Then, before continue speaking about [DAL], the next volume will be [Itsuka SekaiWoSukuu Tame Ni—Qualidea Code] Volume 2. The task in hand will be Shin's mobilization, the connection with Hime, and then Hotaru's expectations. I think the notice will be appeared within this winter; hopefully, you'll look forward it.

Well then, the second last thing, this book was created with the help and effort of various people. The illustrator Tsunako-san, thank you very much for the beautiful illustration for this time too! To put manga artist's elements into a Sister-type of astral dress.....It's extremely beautiful. For all of my family too, thank you very much for

always taking care of me each time. The next one, though I think it's better to say it a little bit earlier.

The designer Kusano-san, everyone from editorial department, publisher, distributors, and everyone who involves in retailing stuff and to you all who already bought this book, I'm so grateful wholeheartedly.

Well then the next are [Itsuka SekaiWoSukuu Tame Ni—Qualidea Code] Volume 2, and the other one is [Date A Live 14] let's meet again next time.

September 2015, Tachibana Koushi.